The Great Nehrus

"*Freedom's battle once begun*
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won."

The Great Nehrus

by

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Integration follows disintegration, but each integration is perhaps on a higher level than the previous one, for it carries subconsciously somewhere the memory of past successes and failures. The burden of the past pursues us, and it is both a burden and inspiration, for it drags us down and at the same time pushes us on. Sometimes we feel vital and youthful and full of energy; at other times thousands of years weigh us down and we feel old and a little weary at this long and interminable pilgrimage. Both are part of us and make us what we are and out of that ceaseless intermingling and conflict something new is always arising.

Jawaharlal Nehru

- Raj Kaul Nehru
  - Lakshmi Narayan Nehru
    - Ganga Dhar Nehru
      - Bansi Dhar Nehru
      - Nandlal Nehru
      - Motilal Nehru
        - Jawaharlal Nehru
          - Indira Priyadarshini
        - Vijayalakshmi Pandit
        - Krishna Hutheesing

PREFACE

We are not here to drive, to drift,
We have hard work to do and stones to lift,
Shun not the life, face it, it is God's gift.

That has been the lodestar of the Great Nehrus whose career and character we are about to study. They have drunk deep the cup of life, like Ulysses, to its dregs. Consequently they stand out as beacons to many a shipwrecked brother or sister who has foundered in the ocean of life.

Pandit Motilal Nehru had built up a fortune after sixty years' hard labour, but he kicked off everything on hearing the country's call. He realised what Emerson, the great philosopher of America, has said :

Not gold, but only men can make
    A people great and strong—
Men who, for truth and honour's sake,
    Stand fast and suffer long.
Brave men who work while others sleep,
    Who dare while others fly—
They build a nation's pillars deep,
    And lift them to the sky.

The three Great Nehrus—Motilal, Jawaharlal and Vijayalakshmi—have always been true

to the noble sentiments expressed in the verses quoted above. And this book is written to trace that golden thread of their lives. What more can I say?

LAHORE: J. S. B
February, 1947.

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PART I

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
[An Historical Study]

Motilal is not dead ; he will live long.
—MAHATMA GANDHI

Decide India's fate in Swaraj Bhawan ; decide it in my presence and let me be a party to the final honourable settlement of the fate of my motherland. Let me die, if die I must, in the lap of a free India. Let me sleep my last sleep not in a subject country, but in a free one.

Motilal Nehru

Chapter One

THE HOUSE OF NEHRUS

The house of the Nehrus is the nursery of freedom-fighters. They have few equals not only in the chronicles of India, but in the entire history of the world. Soongs in China, Roosevelts in America and Pitts in England are some visible parallels of the Nehrus in India.

The honour of founding this remarkable family of the Nehrus belongs to Raj Kaul who migrated from Kashmir to Delhi in the eighteenth century. He came down from the lofty mountains to seek fame and fortune in the dusty plains. There was the hand of destiny behind this move, because the temptation came to him from no smaller quarter than the Mogul Emperor, Farrukhsiar, who succeeded Aurangzeb. It was Raj Kaul's scholarship in Persian and Sanskrit which had captivated Farrukhsiar during his visit to Kashmir. Forthwith an estate was bestowed upon Raj Kaul in the imperial capital of Delhi on the banks of a canal and, from the fact of this residence on the *nahar* (which means a canal), the word "Nehru" came to be attached to his name. Raj Kaul came to be known as Kaul-Nehru, perhaps to distinguish him from other Raj Kauls living in the neighbourhood.

"Kaul had been the family name," says Jawaharlal, "this changed to Kaul-Nehru; and,

in later years, Kaul dropped out and we became simply Nehrus."

I. THE ELDER NEHRUS

But the King Farrukhsiar, who had tempted Raj Kaul away from his literary haunts in the enchanted land of Kashmir, was only a shadow emperor; and it was not long before the Mogul Empire fell into pieces and the Nehrus had to fend for themselves. The family experienced many ups and downs in the unsettled times. The Nehrus soon lost their estate but not their high courage. Lakshmi Narayan Nehru, the grandfather of Motilal, became the first judicial representative to the East India Company at the court of the Mogul Emperor who ruled over a petty dominion. Ganga Dhar Nehru, the father of Motilal, was the Kotwal of Delhi for some time before the Revolt of 1857. The family was marked by a sense of responsibility and strong sense of character. Thus writes C. F. Andrews:

"Kashmiri Brahmins, to which class Pandit Motilal Nehru belonged, are well known all over the north of India both for their intellectual powers and fine appearance. They are, by birth, what may truly be called an aristocratic race, and easily recognised as such. Motilal was typical of this distinguished class and in his old age he gained the reputation of being the 'aristocrat of the Assembly.' His spotless khaddar dress, with his white Kashmiri shawl, suited him perfectly, and his portrait is rightly given the place of honour in his son's *Auto-*

biography. 'The fine features—which I have mentioned—and the fair complexion run through the whole family, and have descended from father to son.'"

II. NEHRUS ON THE MOVE

The Revolt of 1857 shepherded Nehrus out of Delhi. They lost their valuable property. But even more valuable than material possessions were the family papers which perished in the great conflagration. All literary works of Raj Kaul were destroyed by the vandals. The Nehrus joined the army of fugitives and marched to Agra. *En route* they barely escaped being put to the sword by English soldiers. Motilal was not yet born and so he escaped the toils and turmoils of the great revolt.

"My father was not born then," says Jawaharlal, "but my two uncles were already young men and possessed some knowledge of English. This knowledge saved the younger of the two uncles, as well as other members of the family from ignominious end. He was journeying from Delhi with some family members, among whom was his younger sister, a little girl who was very fair, as some Kashmiri children are. Some English soldiers met them on the way and they suspected this little aunt of mine to be an English girl and accused my uncle of kidnapping her. From accusation to summary justice and punishment was usually a matter of minutes those days, and my uncle and others

of the family might well have found themselves hanging on the nearest tree. Fortunately for them, my uncle's knowledge of English delayed matters a little and then someone who knew him passed that way and rescued him and the others."

III. THE EIGHTEEN SIXTIES

The calamities of the revolt were too much for the sensitive soul of Ganga Dhar Nehru, the ex-Kotwal of Delhi, who had seen better days, and now had to begin his career anew at Agra. After five years of rough life he passed away in February, 1861. Three months after was posthumously born his son, Motilal.

"In a little painting," says Jawaharlal, "that we have of our grandfather (Ganga Dhar Nehru), he wears the Mogul court dress with a curved sword in his hand, and might well be taken for a Mogul nobleman, although his features are distinctly Kashmiri."

Motilal Nehru marks a break of the Nehru family from Mogul traditions to British fashions. If the father was a Mogul nobleman, the son grew up to be an English gentleman. Pants and coats and hats took the place of imposing Mogul dress.

The sixties were decisive years in Indian history. Many great men were born in India in that decade. Thus writes C. F. Andrews:

"It is a curious fact that Motilal's birthday came on exactly the same day of the year and month as that of the Poet (Rabindranath Tagore): for he was born on May 6, 1861.

"Among his contemporaries, in Allahabad, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya comes nearest to him in age. Dr. Brajendranath Seal, that giant of massive learning in Bengal, who has just passed away, was somewhat younger. Sir Prafulla Chandra Ray, the renowned chemist, is about the same age as Rabindranath Tagore. Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose was a contemporary. Sir Nilratan Sarkar, who is still with us, belongs to the same generation. Lala Lajpat Rai in the Punjab was younger. Many names might be recalled in other provinces, but space will hardly allow it. What I have tried to point out is that the 'sixties' of last century produced a larger number of eminent men than the years that followed. It must not be forgotten that Mahatma Gandhi himself comes just within this period."

Thus modern history of India dates from the sixties when, after the assumption of power over India by Queen Victoria, a new generation arose out of the ashes of the great Revolt of 1857.

After the death of Motilal's father, the burden of supporting the family fell upon the shoulders of his elder brothers. Bansi Dhar Nehru entered the judicial department of the British Government. He was appointed successively to various posts. The younger brother, Nandlal Nehru, was the Dewan of Khetri State in Rajputana for ten years. Later on, Nandlal settled down as a lawyer in Agra.

Little Motilal lived with Nandlal Nehru. He grew up under the sheltering care of this

brother. There was a bond of deep affection between the two. Being the youngest son, Motilal was also the favourite of his mother.

"She was an old lady," writes Jawaharlal, "with a tremendous will of her own who was not accustomed to be ignored. It is now nearly half a century since her death, but she is still remembered amongst old Kashmiri ladies as a most dominating old woman and quite a terror if her will was flouted."

IV. FROM AGRA TO ALLAHABAD

The brother of Motilal had attached himself to the High Court at Agra. When the High Court moved to Allahabad, the Nehrus moved with the High Court. Ever since Allahabad has been the home of the Nehrus. From Srinagar to Delhi, from Delhi to Agra, and from Agra to Allahabad completed the journey of the great Nehru family.

It was here at Allahabad that Motilal went through school and college. Soon he picked up Persian and Arabic. In his early teens he began learning English. His college career was marked by merry pranks and escapades. He was far from being docile or devoted to his studies. Rather he interested himself in novel adventures and misadventures. He headed the naughty boys in every type of mischief. He was attracted to Western dress and Western ways. His English professors liked his buoyant spirit and were fond of him. They led him out of a fix whenever his mischief cornered him.

In spite of his indifference to studies, Motilal did fairly well in the examinations. As he appeared for B.A. examination, he was not satisfied with his first paper and boycotted the examination and refused to appear again next year.

" Although as a boy," says C. F. Andrews, " Motilal took little interest in his school and college studies he was from an early age keenly interested in the subject of law. He came out first as 'gold medallist' in the High Court Vakils examination and showed at once his marked ability. His father had died three months before he was born, so that he never knew what it was to have a father. But his elder brother, Nandlal, who was much older than himself, took the place of a father towards him during his school and college days and afterwards introduced him into his own practice at the bar. This brother, however, died very early in Motilal's legal career and thus he was soon thrown upon his own resources.

" According to the immemorial custom of India, Motilal was now obliged to bear the burden of all the members of the family who were settled in Allahabad. This meant very hard work at his legal profession, from morning to night, building up his practice. But he thoroughly enjoyed it and very rapidly climbed the ladder which led to success."

It was fortunate for the Nehrus that when Nandlal was overtaken by death, Motilal had already served apprenticeship for three years in law and was ready to step into the

shoes of his brother. He plunged himself into work. He was bent on success. All the briefs of his brother came to him. At an early age he established himself as a successful lawyer. He admired the Englishmen and their ways. He had a feeling that his own countrymen had fallen rather low. He felt that Indians deserved what they had got.

There was a touch of contempt in his mind for the talkative politicians. They talked and talked without doing anything.

" Also," says Jawaharlal, " there was a thought, born in the pride of his own success, that many—certainly not all—of those who took to politics had been failures in life."

Consequently, Motilal did not take any great interest in the Indian National Congress. He was too busy with his profession. Moreover, he felt unsure of his ground in politics. He could not play a second fiddle to anybody. The aggressive spirit of his childhood had given him a new will to power. He loved a fight, but then there was little fight in the politics of the Congress.

Chapter Two

THE LORD OF LUXURY

Motilal Nehru climbed the ladder of success very rapidly and soon came to be counted among the topmost lords of luxury in India. An ever-mounting income revolutionised his standard of living, because more income meant to him more expenses.

"The idea of hoarding," says Jawaharlal, "seemed to my father a slight on his own capacity to earn whenever he liked and as much as he desired."

Motilal was full of the spirit of play. He was fond of good living. Naturally he found little difficulty in spending what he had earned. Gradually the house of the Nehrus became more and more Westernised.

I. EVENINGS IN ALLAHABAD

Many friends came to visit Motilal in the evening. He relaxed after the tension of the day. And the house resounded with his tremendous laughter. Motilal's laugh became famous in Allahabad. Little Jawaharlal used to peep at him and his friends from behind a curtain. He was trying to make out what these big people were talking about. If the child was caught eavesdropping, he was affectionately punished. And his punishment was to sit on his father's knee. Once the boy saw his father

drinking claret or some other red wine. Whisky he knew. Jawaharlal had often seen his father and his friends drinking whisky. But the new red stuff sent a fright into the backbone of the boy.

"I rushed to my mother," says Jawaharlal, "to tell her that father was drinking blood."

Motilal was a hearty man. And he enjoyed society heartily. He drank as others drank. He was a monument of strength and courage. But he also had a rough temper. He was sometimes terrible and the victim of his anger shivered with fright. But he had also a strong sense of humour. And he had an iron will. He could control himself always as a rule.

"One of my earliest recollections," says Jawaharlal, "is of his temper, for I was the victim of it. I must have been five or six then. I noticed one day two fountain-pens on his table and I looked at them with greed. I argued with myself that father could not require both at the same time and so I helped myself to one of them. Later I found that a mighty search was being made for the lost pen and I grew frightened at what I had done, but I did not confess. The pen was discovered and my guilt proclaimed to the world. Father was very angry and he gave me tremendous thrashing. Almost blind with pain and mortification at my disgrace I rushed to my mother, and for several days various creams and ointments were applied to my aching and quivering body."

II. THE HOUSE OF PEACE

In 1899 Motilal Nehru built for himself a palatial house—which is now a national property—and called it Anand Bhawan. It literally means the house of peace. The house—which is now headquarters of the Indian National Congress has a big garden and a swimming pool. Additional buildings were put up later on.

In the evening the friends of Motilal used to come to the pool. The house and the pool were fitted with electric light One was a novelty, the other was an innovation. The pool was swarmed with bathing parties. One of the distinguished men of today, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, was a frequent visitor to the pool. He was then a junior at the Allahabad Bar. Neither Motilal nor Tej Bahadur knew swimming ; but while the latter sat on the first step in fifteen inches of water, refusing absolutely to go forward even to the second step and shouting loudly if any one tried to move him, the former could manage to go the length of the pool with set teeth and violent and exhausting effort. This difference in the physical character was later on illustrated in their political outlook. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru throughout his life has remained a liberal, sitting on the first step of Indian National Congress in fifteen inches of nationalism and absolutely refusing to move forward even to the second step of non-violent non-co-operation and shouting loudly if any one tried to drag him into the extremist fold. On the other hand,

Motilal Nehru crossed the entire swimming pool of the Indian National Congress with set teeth and violent effort which transformed him overnight from an extreme loyalist to the extremist-nationalist on the right hand of Mahatma Gandhi. Sir Tej has remained an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi only from other side of the swimming pool !

C. F. Andrews, a great friend of Motilal, describes his recollections of Anand Bhawan in warm and friendly words :

" It was there, at Anand Bhawan, that I first met Motilal Nehru more than thirty years ago. A family residence of this type is like the ancestral house of a clan in the Highlands of Scotland. Everyone who is a near relative, and also the servants who grow up in it, regard themselves as members of the joint family. The memory of my first meeting with Pandit Motilal Nehru is very dim today ; but I can easily picture the house where he lived and his very handsome appearance. Delhi and Allahabad were closely associated in their intellectual life in those times. There was a close fellowship also between Moslems and Hindus within the different intellectual groups. The common Urdu language, in which very great pride was taken by both Hindus and Moslems, bound them together. The Western culture, which had come also into fashion, was another link common to this very small circle of English-educated people. The members of leading families met continually, especially at marriages.

My own educational work soon brought me into touch with Allahabad and also with Anand Bhawan.

"Motilal Nehru was from the first quite lavish in his hospitality. More and more he had adopted, after each visit to Europe, the expensive standard of living common in the West. Exceedingly foolish stories about his Western habits were spread widely over the north of India, which were ridiculous to those who knew him in his own house; for whatever he did in this direction, as events proved, was merely on the surface, and could be thrown off at a moment's notice. He frankly admired the character of the Englishmen he met who had been trained in the English public schools. Therefore he sent his only son to Harrow, and never regretted that action. But all through his life he was far too deeply wedded to his own country and its traditions to make him ever forget his birthright."

III. A TUSSLE WITH ORTHODOXY

When Mahatma Gandhi was at work as a stretcher-bearer in South Africa during the Boer War, Pandit Motilal Nehru was enjoying a holiday in Europe. But these were the days when crossing the seas was regarded an impure practice by the high priests of Hindudom. Consequently, Motilal's visit to Europe generated a storm among the Kashmiri Brahmins in India.

Motilal Nehru was asked to perform *prayashchit* or purification ceremony on his

return. But he solidly refused to do so.

"Some years previously," says Jawaharlal, "another Kashmiri Brahmin, Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar, who later became a president of the Congress, had gone to England to be called to the bar. On his return the orthodox members of the community had refused to have anything to do with him and he was an outcast, although he performed the *prayashchit* ceremony!"

This was a terrible lesson. So Motilal went a step further and cleared the road for the younger generation. He refused to go through any ceremony at all. He would not yield to the orthodox dictatorship. He did not submit even outwardly to any type of purification. Motilal maintained an aggressive and rather disdainful attitude. A great deal of heat was generated. But the strong man won the day. A great number of Kashmiris joined Motilal and the orthodox dictatorship was exterminated. Ever since the wall has been permanently broken down.

"Large numbers of Kashmiri young men and girls," says Jawaharlal, "have visited Europe and America for their studies and no question has arisen of their performing any ceremonies on their return."

Due to the initiative of Motilal many other restrictions have been swept away. Inter-dining with non-Brahmins, Hindus and Moslems, is quite common. The system of *purdah* has also disappeared among the Kashmiri women.

In May, 1905, Motilal again went to Europe accompanied by his wife, son and daughter. A vacancy was found for Jawaharlal at Harrow. Motilal then went to the Continent. After some months he returned to India with his wife and the baby.

IV. THE PATH TO POLITICS

India was drawing Motilal slowly and steadily into the whirlpool of politics. He made a start with the moderate group. Many of them were his colleagues. He presided over a provincial conference and strongly criticised the extremists. He became president of the U.P. Provincial Committee. He was present at Surat in 1907 when the Congress broke up in utter confusion. Later it emerged purely as a moderate group to which Motilal was already attached.

It was in those days that H. W. Nevinson stopped with Motilal as his guest at Allahabad. In his book on India he refers to Motilal as being "moderate in everything except his generosity."

"This," says Jawaharlal, "was a very wrong estimate, for father was never moderate in anything except his politics . . ."

But slowly and steadily his nature drove him from even that remnant of moderation. Motilal was a man of strong feelings and strong passions. He had tremendous pride and great strength of will. Consequently he was very far from being a moderate man.

In 1907 and 1908 Motilal belonged to the

moderate group. He was bitter against extremists But he admired Tilak. Nevertheless, " he was a moderate of moderates," says his son.

Motilal was a moderate, because he had his grounding in law and constitutionalism. He took a lawyer's view of politics. He had an honest hatred for the confused thinking of the politicians. Hard and extreme words led nowhere. He wanted words to be followed by works. And the latter were missing in politicians. He saw no effective action in prospect. The boycott movements did not appeal to him. These did not seem to carry matters far. Besides he disliked the religious background of nationalism.

" He did not look back," says Jawaharlal, " to a revival in India of ancient times."

Motilal had no sympathy with old customs and traditions. He looked to the West. The Western progress attracted him. He advocated an association with England. The moderates represented an advanced social outlook. But they were a mere handful on the top. And they had no touch with the masses. They only advocated petty social reforms to weaken custom and tradition.

" Having cast his lot with the moderates," says Jawaharlal, " father took an aggressive line. Most of the extremists, apart from a few leaders in Bengal and Poona, were young men and it irritated him to find that these youngsters dared to go their own way. Impatient and intolerant of opposition and not suffer-

ing people whom he considered fools gladly he pitched into them and hit them whenever he could."

While still in England, Jawaharlal read an article written by his father. Loyalism annoyed the Cambridge graduate greatly. So he wrote rather an impertinent letter to his father. Jawaharlal suggested that the British Government was greatly pleased with his activities. This was just the kind of suggestion which would make him wild. And he was very angry. Motilal almost thought of asking his son to return from England immediately.

Chapter Three

A WALK INTO THE WHIRLWIND

It was not long before Pandit Motilal Nehru left his cosy nest of moderation and walked forth into the whirlwind of aggressive politics.

When the Great War Number One broke out, Motilal was a member of the U.P. Defence Board. The Indian Defence Force was treated very differently from the European. Here was a good reason for non-co-operation. Just then came Mrs. Annie Besant's internment.

"In the excitement of the moment," says Jawaharlal, "I managed to get the committee members—they included my father, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. C.Y. Chintamani and other moderate leaders—to agree to cancel our meeting and all other work in connection with the Defence Force as a protest against the Government's action."

It was Motilal Nehru's first act of aggression. And it was made possible by the enthusiasm of his son. Motilal and Jawaharlal acted and reacted upon each other. Thus writes John Gunther :

"His father Motilal was a very important influence on Jawaharlal, which is not surprising considering how sensitive Jawaharlal was and considering the vitality of the old man. Many important men have had great mothers ;

to find a great father passing on his qualities to his son is more unusual. The equation in the Nehru family worked both ways; Jawaharlal influenced Motilal almost as much as *vice versa*. One is reminded of the psycho-analytic phenomenon of counter-transference, wherein the patient attracts and influences the doctor, instead of the doctor attracting the patient." (*Inside Asia*, pp. 456-57.)

I. MAKING UP THE MIND

Motilal, under the influence of his son and through his own convictions, gradually drifted away from the orthodox fold. His nature rebelled against submission to a foreign authority. But even then he was not fascinated by the extremist leaders. Their language jarred upon him. He could not commit himself to any forward line even though he found the moderate tactics no good. He wanted something effective to be done. He was anxious to find a solution for the Hindu-Moslem problem before he would jump into the fire of death-defying extremism.

"If this was found," says Jawaharlal, "then he was prepared to go with the youngest of us."

Motilal was pleased with the joint Congress-League scheme. It was drafted at the house of Motilal in 1916. It opened the way to a joint effort. And Motilal was prepared to go ahead in the very teeth of the moderate group. Final break came during the visit of Edwin Montague, the Secretary of State for

India. A special provincial conference was held at Lucknow over which Pandit Motilal Nehru presided.

"The moderates," says Jawaharlal, "expecting that this conference would adopt a strong line against the Montague-Chelmsford proposals, boycotted the conference. Later they also boycotted the special session of the Congress held to consider the proposals. Since then they have been out of the Congress."

When Motilal joined hands with the active nationalists, the moderates had already dropped out. They kept away from the Congress sessions and public gatherings. They did not present their views and fight for them. It struck Jawaharlal as peculiarly undignified. He thought it unbecoming in public workers. Mr. Sastri was the only moderate leader who kept up the fight.

II. DRIFT TOWARDS EXTREMISM

Politics deprived Anand Bhawan of its peaceful atmosphere. Father watched his son painfully drifting towards extremism. He imagined that his son was heading straight towards violence.

"The end of the World War," says Jawaharlal, "found India in a state of suppressed excitement."

Industrialism had spread. A capitalist class had grown. There was an expectation of great political changes. Political agitation was working itself to a head. People talked of self-determination. Unrest was visible among

the masses. The soldiers were no more subservient robots. Among the Moslems there was resentment over the treatment of Turkey. Mahatma Gandhi led the Khilafat Movement and tried to cement a union between Hindus and Moslems.

Rowlatt Bills were passed to suppress the people. A wave of anger greeted the Bills. Even the moderates opposed the measures. There was a universal opposition. Mahatma Gandhi formed the Satyagraha Sabha and launched a vigorous campaign. Jawaharlal joined the sabha, but Motilal was dead against the idea.

"For many days," says Jawaharlal, "there was this mental conflict, and because both of us felt that big issues were at stake involving a complete upsetting of our lives, we tried hard to be as considerate to each other as possible. I wanted to lessen his obvious suffering if I could, but I had no doubt in my mind that I had to go the way of satyagraha. Both of us had a distressing time, and night after night I wandered about alone, tortured in mind and trying to grope my way out. Father—I discovered later—actually tried sleeping on the floor to find out what it was like, as he thought that this would be my lot in prison."

Motilal invited Gandhiji to Allahabad. They had long confidential talks. As a result Gandhiji advised Jawaharlal not to precipitate matters. Jawaharlal was told not to do anything that might upset his father.

But the things soon took a different turn.

There were hartals all over India to oppose the Rowlatt Bills. There were police firings to oppose the hartals. There was mob violence to oppose the police. There were military massacres to oppose the solitary mob violence. And the net result was the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar.

III. AMRITSAR AND AFTER

Terrible indignity of the martial law prevailed in the Punjab. The Punjab was isolated. It was cut off from the rest of India. A thick veil seemed to cover it. There was hardly any news. There was no traffic to and from the Punjab. As soon as the martial law was withdrawn, Pandit Motilal Nehru rushed to the Punjab. And here he met his friend C. F. Andrews. Let Andrews carry the tale forward :

" When I first came to know him intimately was in the autumn of 1919 at Amritsar and Lahore, where we met together during the first days of the Congress enquiry into the Punjab disturbances and the acts which had been committed under martial law.

" His son, Jawaharlal Nehru, had come up alone, in the first instance, immediately after martial law had been withdrawn and the entry into the Punjab had become possible. We had lived together for some time at Harkishen Lal's house in Lahore before any one else arrived. Each day, when we came back from one disturbed area after another, we used to compare notes in the evening. Then Motilal

Nehru himself came, as soon as he was free from his engagements. Mahatma Gandhi soon followed, when the order against him was withdrawn. It was painful to witness how shock after shock went home, when they both examined, as trained lawyers, the evidence which we put before them. Some of the worst things that were done under martial law were not done in Amritsar or in Lahore, but in the Gujranwala district, in villages whose names even were quite unknown. It was a lesson that I never forget to notice how very carefully they sifted the evidence, and at once put aside as untrustworthy all that I had collected, at second hand, on hearsay only.

"Long before this enquiry was over, the more urgent call suddenly came to me to go out to Kenya and South Africa. I was very sorry to go away, but before I left the Punjab a golden opportunity had been given me of seeing at first hand those two leaders of India, as they then were, closely associated together in this common investigation on behalf of those who had suffered under martial law.

"That memorable year 1919, in Indian history, changed once and for all the mode of life of Pandit Motilal Nehru. Before this time, as we have seen, he had made some of his closest friends in Europe, and also among the ruling classes in India who were British by race and tradition. He greatly admired that tradition, while holding himself free to criticise it. He had also many friends among the aristocracy of India. His whole mind had

been steeped in law and constitutional government. Though he had been for some time a member of the Congress, he had always represented the right rather than the left. But Amritsar shook the very foundations of the faith on which he had built up hitherto; and when he presided over the National Congress, which was held at Amritsar that very year, 1919, he felt that the parting of the ways had come between him and his old liberal friends. Then, when at last the call came to join the non-co-operation movement, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, he was fully prepared to accept it. He did this slowly and deliberately, realising all the consequences which it involved.

"He would have been the first to acknowledge that, in his own home, there were those on both sides of the family—the women no less than men—who were eager to help him to make this great decision to join Mahatma Gandhi. Then, as soon as he had made it, the whole family became united. Jawaharlal's mother and wife and daughter took part in the struggle side by side with Motilal Nehru himself and his son."

Motilal's chairmanship of the Amritsar Congress during Christmas, 1919, will long be remembered. He issued a moving appeal to the moderate leaders. He invited the liberals to join this session because of the new situation created by the horrors of the martial law.

"The lacerated heart of the Punjab called to them," he wrote. Would they not answer

the call ? No, they did not. They refused to join the session, because they were too timid to do so. Their eyes were on the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms ar.d the spoils of office that awaited those who played into the hands of the British lion.

" This refusal," says Jawaharlal, " hurt father and widened the gulf between him and the liberals."

When his son was externed from Mussoorie in May, 1920, Motilal had some rough correspondence with Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of the United Provinces, whom he knew personally. As a result the order was rescinded. It was perhaps the last opportunity when Motilal used his moderate friendliness to over-influence his extremist politics.

Chapter Four

FROM WHIRLWIND TO WHIRLPOOL

The whirlwind of active politics did not hold Motilal Nehru for long. What he wanted was not merely active patriotism. He was itching for the war of independence. So straightway he leapt into the whirlpool of non-violent non-co-operation.

A special session of the Congress was held at Calcutta in the autumn of 1920. Lala Lajpat Rai presided. The entire old guard, including Lalaji and C. R. Das, were opposed to Gandhiji's resolution of non-co-operation. Of all the elder statesmen, Motilal alone stood like a rock by the side of Gandhiji.

"He was inevitably drawn," says Jawaharlal, "to form of effective action, and the proposal did embody effective action, though not exactly on the lines of his thought."

I. COMING TO GRIPS

Motilal was continually grappling with the problem. He was coming to grips with bureaucracy. Non-co-operation meant a withdrawing from his legal practice. It meant a total break with his past life. And let us not forget that Motilal was approaching his sixtieth year. But the spirit of the Revolt of 1857 was pulsating in his veins. Any other man in his position would have shuddered.

" It was a break," says Jawaharlal, " from old political colleagues, from his profession, from the social life to which he had grown accustomed, and a giving up of many expensive habits which he had grown into."

Step by step Motilal marched forward. He threw in his lot whole-heartedly with the new movement. His anger was steadily accumulating. The bitterness of national humiliation at Jallianwala Bagh filled his heart. But when he joined the satyagraha movement, he was not swept away by the wave of enthusiasm. His emotion backed the reason of a lawyer's trained mind.

The tide of non-co-operation soon spread all over the country. The appeal for boycott of elections was remarkably successful. It was at the Calcutta session that Mr. Jinnah dropped out of the Congress. The moderates merged themselves with the Government and became ministers under the new scheme. Nevertheless the British authority was toppling down, although gaols were filled with political prisoners. The Government confessed that the initiative was with the " enemy "—the Congress. Motilal and Jawaharlal both were arrested. The popular slogan was : *Hindu-Mussulman ki jai !* Then suddenly Chauri-Chaura changed the history of the movement. There in February, 1922, people answered the atrocities of the police by setting the police-station on fire and burning half a dozen policemen. As a result Gandhiji suspended the movement of civil resistance.

II. MOTILAL AND GANDHIJI

Motilal was upset by the action of Gandhiji. So many other statesmen. Soon there arose a struggle between the "changers" and "no-changers." Motilal always maintained a profound respect for Gandhiji.

"Yet," says C. F. Andrews, "there was a marked difference from the very first that soon revealed itself. Motilal Nehru, as I have just said, was quite obviously inclined to the right in all his actions and decisions. Even after he had joined the non-co-operation movement this continued. So, after the first flush of the new venture of non-co-operation was over and it became logically evident to him that he could win more power by entering the Central Legislative Assembly, he was prepared to do this along with his great friend C. R. Das of Bengal. He was thus led materially to differ from Mahatma Gandhi. Those who followed the latter were called no-changers. As a parallel organisation, the Swaraj Party was formed by Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das. The parliamentary methods of obstruction, which Parnell and his Irishmen had so brilliantly tried out at Westminster, were put into execution at Delhi.

"The next time I met Pandit Motilal Nehru was at Juhu, near Bombay, where Mahatma Gandhi was recovering from his very serious operation in the Sasson Hospital at Poona. He came and stayed at Juhu for some time in order to be near Mahatmaji and talk things over; and I had many opportunities of seeing

the lighter side of his character as the two leaders together made great fun of one another. Mahatmaji was convalescent and recovering health. He was thus in a joking mood with everyone. The whole Nehru family was in residence at Juhu during those extraordinary days, while Motilal and Gandhi talked out—as it seemed to me, almost interminably—the pros and cons of 'council entry.' Neither convinced the other; but, meanwhile, in the intervals between these long conversations, I had got to know Pandit Motilal Nehru very much better than I had ever done before. I was also able to witness and appreciate his deep admiration for Mahatma Gandhi as a man. As a 'mahatma' he was far less interested in him; but that made everything between them more human. He would chaff Gandhi mercilessly and nothing pleased him better. I wish I could remember some of the jokes, which were of a very elementary character, but they have quite passed from me. Just one I recollect, how he called Mahatma Gandhi 'a bit of a dandy' because of his spotlessly white khaddar! Behind all the merriment, however, was a firmness on both sides which became at times crucially painful because the two minds, so strongly dissimilar, would not always work together. Yet the affection between them became all the deeper because of their very differences."

The portrait drawn by Jawaharlal of his father is one of the finest descriptions in his *Autobiography*. "There was in him," he

writes, "a strength of personality and a measure of kingliness. In any gathering he was present he would inevitably be the centre and the hub. Whatever the place he sat at table, it would become, as an eminent English judge said later, the head of the table. He was neither meek nor mild. Consciously imperious, he created great loyalty as well as bitter opposition. It was difficult to feel neutral about him; one had to like him or dislike him. With a broad forehead, tight lips, and a determined chin he had a marked resemblance to the busts of the Roman Emperors in the museums in Italy. There was a magnificence about him and a grand manner, which is sadly to seek in this world of today."

"I remember," he adds, "showing Gandhiji a photograph of him, where he had no moustache, and till then Gandhiji had always seen him with a fine moustache. He startled almost on seeing this photograph and gazed long upon it; for the absence of the moustache brought out the hardness of the mouth and chin; and he said with a somewhat dry smile that now he realised what he had to contend against. The face was softened, however, by the eyes and by the lines that frequent laughter had made. But sometimes the eyes glittered."

"In all my own memories of him," says Andrews, "this gentler side predominated, and I remember him chiefly by his lavish fund of humour and his eagerness to engage in a bout of wit and merriment especially with Gandhiji

himself. Yet no one admired Gandhi more than Motilal Nehru."

"That humble and lonely figure," Motilal wrote about him, "standing erect, on the firm footholds of faith unshakable and strength unconquerable, continues to send out to his countrymen his message of sacrifice and suffering for the motherland."

III. PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAMME

Motilal and C. R. Das favoured entry into legislatures for pushing up the national struggle within the British wheels. In 1920 in boycotting the elections Motilal had subordinated his view-point to that of Gandhiji. But now the conditions had changed. And a change of programme was essential.

There grew up a great friendship between Motilal and C. R. Das. It was something more than a political companionship. They had warmth and intimacy between them. There were no barriers between the two. They took each other to heart. Motilal was nine years older than Das, but he was healthier and stronger of the two. Although they both had a legal background, they differed in many ways. Das was a poet with an emotional outlook and a religious background. Motilal was a prosaic man with a practical outlook and a great organising ability. The two fitted into each other and made an effective union. This friendship made the success of the swarajists a practical proposition.

"Desbandu Das tried," says Jawaharlal,

"soon after my discharge from prison to convert me to the swarajist creed. I did not succumb to his advocacy, though I was by no means clear as to what I should do. It is curious and rather remarkable, but characteristic of him, that my father, who was at the time very keen on the Swaraj Party, never tried to press me or influence me in that direction. It was obvious that he would have been very pleased if I joined him in his campaign, but with extraordinary consideration for me, he left me to myself as far as this subject was concerned."

At last Mahatmaji gave way; and at the next elections the Swaraj Party, as it was called, was fully organised and everywhere carried the polls. When Motilal Nehru was chosen to be Leader of the Opposition in the Central Assembly at New Delhi, as the head of the Swaraj Party, he felt himself once more entirely in his own element. He was no longer like a fish out of water. His whole legal training and his knowledge of assemblies had all along made him anxious to engage in a battle royal with the Imperial Government, using its own weapons to defeat it. He was quite certain that he could bring it down to its knees.

In this opinion he was more or less justified; for the Government suffered outwardly defeat after defeat at his hands. Indeed, on all the larger issues, it could only rely on its own official and nominated members, and these, by themselves, were not sufficient to form a majority. But his triumphs proved to be Pyrrhic victories after all, because as soon as

ever any Government measure was defeated it was at once certificated by the Viceroy. There was also a majority ready in the Upper House to reverse the decision of the Assembly.

A subtle danger, meanwhile, attacked the Swaraj Party. For every possible inducement was given to its members to serve on one committee after another, or take this post or that, bringing certain emoluments with them. When these were accepted, the full force of a revolutionary method of procedure was continually frustrated.

During these difficult years, Pandit Motilal Nehru undertook almost alone the immensely arduous task of drawing up a form of constitution, by which India should have full dominion status within the British Commonwealth. His son, Jawaharlal, could not endure the limited terms on which this constitution was being framed, because they did not make absolutely clear that India's full independence was the goal. A considerable amount of friction arose between father and son on this issue and a compromise was reached at last with great difficulty, whereby the offer to accept this "dominion status" constitution would expire at the end of the year 1929.

Chapter Five

LEADER OF LEADERS

Motilal Nehru may be looked upon as the leader of leaders. He was destined to leave his mark among the topmost figures of his country. Even though he took to politics rather late in the day, his progress was brisk, and coming from behind the curtain of the moderate fold, he soon took reins of the most revolutionary elements in the country. Mahatma Gandhi valued his views far above that of anybody else.

When Motilal joined the satyagraha movement, he relinquished his luxurious life at a single stroke. He sold away much of his furniture to get rid of superfluities and also to raise some money. Horses and carriages fell under the auctioneer's hammer. Some of the property was seized by the police. After giving up practice Motilal refused to accept any briefs. Once a client offered him a lakh of rupees as fees for a case, but the hero looked disdainfully at the money.

"Well, *beti*," said Motilal to his little daughter, "do you think it would be right for me to accept this case?"

"No, father," she said, "I don't think you should."

"I am sorry," he said to his client, "you see even my daughter objects."

When Motilal undertook the swarajist movement, it was purely from impersonal motives. He discouraged careerists and opportunists. Motilal declared in unmistakable terms that he would not hesitate "to cut off a diseased limb" from the party. C. F. Andrews pays a magnificent tribute to his leadership:

"Looking back after all these years, it has now become evident to thinking men all over the world that the good fight which Motilal Nehru fought was carried through to the end with a chivalry and courtesy towards his opponents that made his cause truly great and noble. His name is honoured today in India, not only by his fellow-countrymen, but also by every European. In his own career, as a statesman he stands out more prominently than ever, as one who brought the debates of the Central Assembly at Delhi to a higher parliamentary level than has ever been reached before or since. Certainly no one has ever been so great as he, as Leader of the Opposition. In this, and in a thousand other ways, he has been one of the makers of modern India."

Among the leading legal luminaries as well as the intrepid Indian patriots of this century, Pandit Motilal Nehru occupied an exalted place, in spite of the fact that his entry into public life was late. During the twelve years (1919 to 1931) as a trusted lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi, he made a magnificent contribution towards the making

of the political destiny of India. How "the pearl among the Pandits," who always appeared as if he had just left the shop of a tailor, began to wear coarse khaddar and to take pride in donning a Gandhi cap, was something astounding. But how the Pandit, the dweller of a palace, who attended the Coronation Durbar at Delhi in 1911 as the guest of a Lieutenant-Governor, ten years later, cheerfully and bravely bore the sufferings of gaol life, was a unique miracle, attributable to the Mahatma—the Miracle Man of the Modern Times.

Pandit Motilal Nehru was gifted with an extraordinary brain and had the vision of a seer. A leader of tremendous drive, he had remarkable organising ability and was possessed of quick repartee. As the Leader of Opposition in the Central Assembly, from 1924 to 1927, he was at his best when he spoke on legal and constitutional questions. An ornament to the Assembly, he was greatly looked up to by the Treasury Benches as well; and though he was the busiest politician of his time, he found time to do his legislative work more regularly than many members of his own party—the Swaraj Party.

His idealism was tempered by robust realism and he never lost sight of the difficulties and complexities of the Indian problem. For instance, he held "Dominion status can easily become more than independence, if we have sanction to back it. Independence can easily become a farce, if it lacks sanction. What is

in a name if we have the reality. A rose smells just as sweet whether you know it by that name or any other. . . .Our destiny is freedom, the form and extent of which will depend upon the time when and the circumstances under which it comes. . . . The masses want bread. They have no time to make experiments and no use for theories and dogmas imported from abroad." These words are from Pandit Motilal Nehru's historic presidential address at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress, held in December, 1928.

I. INDIA ON THE MARCH

In the autumn of 1923, Motilal went to Nabha to help Jawaharlal who was interned by the state authorities, because the boy defied the state order in going to observe the atrocities committed on the Sikhs during a satyagraha which they had launched.

Motilal knew something about the Indian states. And, therefore, he was considerably upset. At that time he knew only the fact of arrest. Nothing else was known to him. In his distress he telegraphed to the Viceroy for the news. Difficulties were put in the way of Motilal visiting Nabha. But he was allowed at last to interview Jawaharlal in prison. He could not be of any help to his son, because the latter refused to defend himself. Jawaharlal begged his father to return to Allahabad, and not to worry about him. So Motilal did return to Allahabad, but he left behind a lawyer to watch the proceedings.

In the summer of 1927 Motilal went to Europe. Jawaharlal met him at Venice. Motilal Nehru with his wife, son and younger daughter paid a visit to Moscow. They attended in November the tenth anniversary of the Soviet. It was a brief visit only for three or four days. But they were glad that they went. Even a glimpse was worth while. It could not teach them much about Russia, but they got a good background for studying communism.

"To my father," says Jawaharlal, "all such Soviet and collectivist ideas were wholly novel. His whole training had been legal and constitutional, and he could not easily get out of the framework. But he was definitely impressed by what he saw in Moscow."

Motilal was in Moscow when the announcement about the Simon Commission was made. He read the news in a Moscow sheet. Returning from Moscow, Motilal appeared in the Privy Council in London in an Indian appeal. There Sir John Simon was his colleague in the same case. It was an old *zamindari* case.

It was not long before Sir Simon visited India and everywhere he was greeted with black flags. The Government opposed the popular demonstration and the policeman's baton was freely made use of. Lala Lajpat Rai fell victim to the lathi charge at Lahore and many leaders received injuries including the distinguished son of Motilal.

Jawaharlal was at Lucknow. He thought that the news would upset his father. So he

telephoned to him that he was well. But Motilal was nevertheless upset. He found it difficult to sleep. The last train had gone. So Motilal started by car. He had some accident on the way. Nevertheless he reached Lucknow at 5 a.m. covering a journey of one hundred and forty-six miles but utterly tired and exhausted.

II. CALCUTTA CONGRESS

The Calcutta Congress was held towards the end of 1928. Motilal presided over it.

"He was," says Jawaharlal, "full of the All-Parties Conference and of his report to it and wanted to push this through the Congress. To this he knew that I was not agreeable, because I was not prepared to compromise on the independence issue, and this irritated him. We did not argue about the matter much, but there was a definite feeling of mental conflict between us, an attempt to pull different ways. Difference of opinion we had often had before, vital differences which had kept us in different political camps. But I do not think that at any previous or subsequent occasion the tension had been so great. Both of us were rather unhappy about it."

Matters came to a head at Calcutta. Motilal made it clear that if he could not have the majority for his resolution in favour of the All-Parties Report, he would refuse to preside over the session. This was a perfectly reasonable course to adopt. This had a good effect. A compromise formula was announced, but it

fell through. The main resolution was adopted as desired by Motilal, but it was laid down that if the British Government did not grant dominion status within a year, the Congress will revert to full independence.

"It was," says Jawaharlal, "an offer of a year's grace and a polite ultimatum."

The chairmanship of Motilal was followed by the chairmanship of his son the next year to preside over the Lahore Congress, where the resolution for complete independence was passed which stands today.

"My election," says Jawaharlal, "was indeed a great honour and a great responsibility for me; it was unique in that a son was immediately following his father in the presidential chair."

III. THE SALT MARCH

The Lahore Congress was followed by civil disobedience movement. Mahatma Gandhi notified to the Government that the salt tax was unjust and that it should be scrapped. The British authorities refused to budge an inch. So salt became a word of magic and everybody began to prepare salt in defiance of the Government.

Motilal and his son went to see Gandhiji on his historic salt march. They met him at Jambusar with his pilgrim band. They spent a few hours with him there. Then they saw him stride away in his journey to the next stage in the historic march.

"At Jambusar," says Jawaharlal Nehru,

"myfather had decided, in consultation with Gandhiji, to make a gift of his old house in Allahabad to the nation and rename it Swaraj Bhawan. On his return to Allahabad he made the announcement, and actually handed over to the Congress people; part of the large property being converted into a hospital. He was unable to go through the legal formalities at that time, and, a year and a half later, I created a trust of the property, in accordance with his wishes."

It was not long before Motilal, his son, daughter-in-law, wife and other relatives found themselves in prison along with other leaders and thousands of workers.

Motilal was in very poor health when he was sent up to the gaol. And there he was kept in conditions of extreme discomfort. Monsoon had set in and it was impossible to keep dry in the Naini Prison. Sometimes he had fever.

"At night," says Jawaharlal, "it was a problem where to put father's bed, in that ten-feet-by-five-feet verandah attached to our cell, to avoid the rain."

On August 10, 1930, Motilal, his son and Mahmud were sent by a special train from Naini to Poona. Although the train did not stop at big stations, people were present at every station to greet them who had somehow received the secret news of their arrival. They had come to see Gandhiji but they were not allowed to see him for two days. It rather got on the nerves of Motilal. At last all the

prominent Congressmen were brought together and the conference with Messrs. Sapru and Jayakar lasted three days.

The strain of the conference exhausted Motilal and he got fever. The Government of Bombay tried to offer every comfort. Jawaharlal has an amusing anecdote :

"Colonel Martin, the Superintendent, asked father what kind of food he would like. Father told him that he took very simple and light food, and then he enumerated his various requirements from early morning tea in bed to dinner at night. (In Naini we used to get food for him daily from home.) The list father gave in all innocence and simplicity consisted certainly of light foods, but it was impressive. Very probably at the Ritz or Savoy it would have been considered simple ordinary food, as father himself was convinced that it was. But in Yervada it seemed strange and far away and most inappropriate. Mahmud and I were highly amused to watch the expression on Colonel Martin's face as he listened to father's numerous and expensive requirements in the way of food. For a long time he had in his keeping the greatest and most famous of India's leaders, and all that he had required in the way of food was goat's milk, dates, and perhaps oranges occasionally. The new type of leader that had come to him was very different."

IV. THE LAST JOURNEY

The condition of Motilal soon deteriorated

and he was released on account of serious illness. Till the last minute his will-power remained and he kept body and mind together. Almost all the Congress leaders were in Allahabad for consultations. Leaders came to see him in twos and threes in the mornings and evenings. Motilal insisted on sitting up in an easy chair to receive them. His face was swollen. So he sat massively and expressionless. As the friends came to see him, there was a glitter in his eyes.

"There he sat like an old lion," says Jawaharlal, "mortally wounded and with his physical strength almost gone, but still very leonine and kingly."

C. F. Andrews, his friend, mentions three causes of his death:

"(1) Long before he took part in the struggle he had been afflicted for very many years with an acute form of asthma, which caused him great physical pain and put a severe strain upon his heart. But his utterly resolute temperament would not allow him for a moment to stand by while others suffered, even though he was already to all intents and purposes an invalid and had reached his seventieth year.

"(2) In the gaol, his illness rapidly grew worse, and it was obvious that prison life was doing him untold injury, because he could get no proper treatment for his asthma and heart trouble, under gaol conditions. Yet he became immediately angry if any one suggested that he should be released because of his infirmities.

He went to the length of sending a telegram to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, saying that he did not wish to claim any exemption. But on the doctors' imperative orders he was discharged after exactly ten weeks' imprisonment.

"(3) Then came the fifth arrest of his only son, Jawaharlal. The old father pulled himself together and declared to everyone present that he was going to be ill no longer. For a time his indomitable spirit prevailed; but after a short period the blood came back into his sputum in greater quantities than ever. Therefore, he was urged to go to Calcutta for the purpose of taking a sea voyage along with a friend who was a doctor: but his condition so quickly grew worse that he could not make his journey any further than Calcutta. Yet even then his will was quite unconquerable, and he carried forward every part of his civil resistance just as before.

"He returned to Allahabad, and his son Jawaharlal was discharged a little while before the others in order to be with him. Mahatma Gandhi had also been discharged at Yervada and many others among the Congress leaders. These came to Allahabad and were able to meet him, one by one, for the last time before his death."

"I am going soon," he said to Mahatma Gandhi, "and I shall not be here to see swaraj. But I know that you have won it."

The end came on February 6th, 1931. For many millions, in every part of India, it seemed as if a dear personal friend had been

taken from them. His son writes :

"I was dazed all that day, hardly realising what had happened, and a succession of events and large crowds kept me from thinking. Great crowds in Lucknow, gathered together at brief notice—the swift dash from Lucknow to Allahabad sitting by the body, wrapped in our national flag, and with a big flag flying above—the arrival at Allahabad, and the huge crowds that had gathered for miles to pay homage to his memory. There were some ceremonies at home, and then the last journey to the Ganga with a mighty concourse of people. As evening fell on the river-bank on that winter day, the great flames leapt up and consumed that body which had meant so much to us, who were close to him, as well as to millions in India. Gandhiji said a few moving words to the multitude and then all of us crept silently home. The stars were out and shining brightly when he returned, lonely and desolate."

Messages came pouring in from every side—from those who had been his most stalwart opponents in the Assembly, from the Viceroy and Lady Irwin, as well as from those dear companions who had stood side by side with him in the civil resistance campaign.

"This tremendous volume of goodwill and sympathy," wrote Jawaharlal, "took away somewhat the sting from our sorrow ; but it was, above all, the wonderfully soothing and healing presence of Gandhiji that helped my mother and all of us to face that crisis in our lives."

V. THE MIGHTY MAN

Pandit Motilal Nehru enjoyed India-wide reputation as a sound and brilliant lawyer and as a Congress leader he was one of the greatest figures of this country. It can be safely maintained that by his intellectual powers and personal gifts he could outshine the most eminent European statesman of his day. In fighting for the freedom of his country he counted no sacrifice too great. The ideal that he has bequeathed to us can never perish. At the moment when tempers are frayed and the atmosphere is surcharged with communal hatred, some incidents of his life are worth noting :

(*a*) Towards the end of 1926, during an electioneering campaign, in reply to the query of a press reporter of the United Provinces as to whether he was a vegetarian or not, Pandit Motilal Nehru remarked, " But for half-a-dozen eggs which I took this morning it would have been rather difficult for me to tackle hecklers like you." At this candid and unexpected reply the reporter got dumbfounded and could not put further questions.

(*b*) Once in a crowded open-air meeting, held at Lahore in support of Diwan Chaman Lal's candidature for the Central Legislative Assembly, while answering an inconvenient question of a bitter opponent of the Congress, Pandit Motilal gave a considerable shock to the religious susceptibilities of a section of his audience by declaring, " Let alone the *Vedas*, I do not believe in the Divine Revelation of

any scripture, whatsoever. Of course, as codes of moral guidance almost all the religious books are quite good. But to say that God speaks to man, is something beyond my grasp."

The foregoing may not be entirely to the taste of some of the engineers of souls, but Pandit Motilal derived satisfaction from a sort of social but "unspiritual" religion. He never believed in chloroforming his senses with a cloud of superstitious dogma ; nor did he ever care for the threats of eternal damnation. On the contrary, he held that "the aim of all education and progress is to develop the collective instinct in man ; to teach him to co-operate with his neighbour and to make him feel that his individual good depends on the good of society as a whole. Only thus can the selfish and individualistic instincts be suppressed and the energy of mankind be diverted from mutual competition to co-operation for the common welfare. Religion as practised today is, however, the greatest separatist force. It puts artificial barriers between man and man, and prevents the development of healthy and co-operative national life. Not content with its reactionary influence on social matters, it has invaded the domain of politics and economics and affects every aspect of our life. Its association with politics has been to the good of neither. Religion has been degraded and politics has sunk into the mire." Thus spoke Pandit Motilal Nehru at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress, held in December, 1928.

any scripture whatsoever. Of course it takes a good guidance about all the religious books are truly good. But to say that God speaks to man is something beyond my grasp."

The foregoing gives the first clue to the basis of some of the [illegible] of [illegible] but Pandit Motilal formed conviction from a sure foundation of [illegible] approval of reason. He never believed in associating his [illegible] with a [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] On the other side, he held that the aim of all [illegible] and [illegible] was to [illegible] on the [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] with his [illegible] and to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Only [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] Motilal Nehru at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress held in December 1928.

PART II

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
[A Political Study]

I know no figure in contemporary politics of greater mobility than he.
—HAROLD LASKI

We worked for the dawn, but the long night has continued, and it may continue . . . . how long I do not know. Many of us now in the vanguard of the nation's fight may not live to see the dawn. But the dawn will come. Meanwhile, the torch has got to be kept burning to light the path. And I want to know how many brave arms are there amongst you to take this torch from my failing hands. Be worthy of the charge.

Jawaharlal Nehru

Chapter One

SON OF SUCCESS

The great son of the great father, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was born on November 14, 1889. Having come with a golden spoon in his mouth, the child was what is called in literature "a son of success". Motilal had everything that money could buy when Jawaharlal appeared to light up the house of the Nehrus. He was the only child of his parents for the eleven years of his existence.

"An only son of prosperous parents is apt to be spoilt," says Jawaharlal.

Yet Jawaharlal was not spoilt.

I. CHILDHOOD

The childhood of Jawaharlal was a sheltered one. He was fond of listening to the talks of the grown-ups. These talks usually dealt with the insolence of Anglo-Indians.

"Whenever an Indian hit back," says Jawaharlal, "I was glad."

Sometimes Indians did hit back. The cousins of Jawaharlal always did. But little Nehru had no feeling against individual Englishmen. He had English governesses. He fondled with the English friends of his father. He admired the English but not the Anglo-Indians, who were rather arrogant in those days.

Jawaharlal admired father tremendously. But Motilal was a strong man. And the boy have had plenty of thrashing. Therefore, the child was mightily afraid of the daddy. Once he was caught for having stolen the fountain-pen of Motilal and severely punished.

But the child was never afraid of his mother. She never beat him. She was *petite* and short of stature. He admired her beauty. He loved her amazingly small hands.

" Soon," says Jawaharlal, " I was almost as tall as she was and felt more of an equal with her."

His early confidant was a Moslem. He was called Mubarak Ali. The Moslem gentleman was the *munshi* of his father. He had passed through the thick and thin of the Revolt of 1857 and used to tell anecdotes to little Nehru which the child very much liked. He was also fond of stories from the Hindu epics. But of religion he had a very hazy notion.

" It seemed to be a women's affair." Now unluckily it has become the politician's affair !

The child was interested in holidays. But most of all he was interested in his own birthday. This was a day of great excitement for him. He was weighed against wheat and rice which were distributed to the poor. He arrayed himself in beautiful clothes. He received presents. Later in the day there was a party.

" My chief grievance was," he says, " that my birthday came so rarely. Indeed I tried to

start an agitation for more frequent birthdays!"

The innocent political agitator was already in the making.

II. BOYHOOD

In May, 1905, when Jawaharlal was fifteen, he set sail for England along with his parents and the baby sister. At Dover he read of the Japanese victory over Russia and was in high humour.

The boy was fortunate in finding a vacancy at Harrow. His parents returned home. He played and enjoyed himself. His interests were wider than those of the English boys. He read books and newspapers while the English lads had nothing to talk about except their cricket.

"I remember," he says, "writing to my father how dull most of the English boys were...."

Paramjit Singh, the son of the Maharaja of Kapurthala, was his class-fellow. He was a complete misfit and made himself a butt of laughter. Boys made fun of him. This irritated him greatly.

"Sometimes he used to tell them what he would do to them if they came to Kapurthala!"

This did not improve matters. The boys laughed at him all the more heartily. A good example of state princes' pride and punishment.

Leaving Harrow, Jawaharlal went up to

Cambridge, Trinity College, in October, 1907. Three years he was at Cambridge. He took the Natural Science Tripos. His subjects were Chemistry, Botany and Geology. He had to join the college debating club called the Magpie and Stump. But he was not interested in speaking. A member not speaking for the whole term had to pay fine.

"Often I paid the fine," says Jawaharlal.

Master Nehru left Cambridge in 1910 after taking his degree. He was moderately successful in the Science Tripos and got second-class honours. Then he got through the Bar examinations and returned to India in the summer of 1912.

i"As I landed in Bombay," he says, "I was a bt of a prig with little to commend me."

III. YOUTH

When Jawaharlal arrived in India, Tilak was in gaol. The Congress was a moderate group. Jawaharlal went to the Bankipore Congress as a delegate in 1912. It was very much an English-knowing upper-class affair. Morning coats and well-pressed trousers were greatly in evidence. Essentially it was a social gathering. There was no political excitement.

Jawaharlal took to law. But law did not enthuse him. He tried to indulge in hunting but like Buddha it left him cold. His reputation was bloodless. He felt much dissatisfied with life. He joined Gokhale's Servants of India Society. Here he found "straight and single-minded and continuous work."

Then there came the World War Number One. And it absorbed attention. Two Home Leagues were started, one by Lokamanya Tilak, the other by Mrs. Annie Besant. Young Nehru joined the both ! But he favoured the woman.

"I worked especially for Mrs. Besant's League," says Jawaharlal.

When Annie Besant was arrested by the Government, he got his father, Sir Sapru, Chintamani and others to suspend work of the U.P. Defence Force Board of which they formed the committee. Thus began the story of non-violent non-co-operation before Mahatma Gandhi had arrived on the scene.

The wedding of Jawaharlal took place in 1916 in the city of Delhi. That summer he spent some months in Kashmir. He enjoyed the picturesque beauty of the snows immensely.

Jawaharlal reaped a good harvest of experience out of the Rowlatt Bills and the Khilafat Movement. After the Jallianwala Bagh, Jawaharlal accompanied C. R. Das to assist him in making enquiries at Lahore. There he listened to the episodes of breath-taking atrocities during the Martial Law.

Then there came the Amritsar Congress over which the father of Jawaharlal presided.

"The Amritsar Congress was the first Gandhi Congress," says Jawaharlal.

IV. MANHOOD

In May, 1920, Jawaharlal took mother

and wife to Mussoorie. Both of them were unwell. They stopped at the Savoy Hotel where the Afghan Mission was also putting up. The Afghans kept separately and did not mix with anybody. Nevertheless, Jawaharlal was warned by the police not to have any dealings with the Afghan Delegation. Such a thing was absurd, because Jawaharlal never have had the slightest intention to do so. So he refused to give an undertaking. As a result he was externed from Mussoorie. That externment brought Jawaharlal into active contact with the peasants. And it proved a blessing in disguise. Later the order was rescinded.

Then Gandhiji launched the non-co-operation and thousands of heroes marched to the prisons. When the Prince of Wales came to India, empty streets greeted him. Jawaharlal and his father were arrested along with other leaders. At last the movement was stopped by Gandhiji due to mob violence at Chauri Chaura.

Jawaharlal was discharged from the Lucknow gaol in January, 1923, and in autumn of the same year he was badly interned at Nabha which brought him the typhus and kept him down for many weeks.

Chapter Two

PRINCES, PUPPETS AND PEOPLE

The princes in Indian states are puppets of the British Government for tyrannising over the people. Ever since Jawaharlal have had his first interlude at Nabha in the autumn of 1923, he has carried on a ceaseless tussle with the state rulers and the Political Department.

Jawaharlal had gone to Nabha in 1923 to observe a Sikh religious agitation in which Sikhs were brutally wounded and killed by the state authorities. Jawaharlal and his companions were arrested and most mercilessly treated.

"This march of ours," says Jawaharlal, "down the streets of Jaito town reminded me forcibly of a dog being led on by a chain."

They were kept in a most insanitary cell infested with rats and insects and throughout the night their joint handcuff and the heavy chain kept them company. After a sham trial and unwarranted persecution they were released.

Jawaharlal has been the president of the All-India States Peoples' Conference ever since its inception, and his statements on the tyranny of the ruling princes make voluminous literature. Herebelow are detailed some of his activities and remarks of the year 1946.

Jawaharlal has boldly castigated the Americans by telling them candidly that they are underwriting British imperialism in India even in the states.

I. AMERICA UNDERWRITING BRITAIN

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has thrown a stone into the pool of American opinion that has produced waves of remarkably divergent reactions, cabled Stanley Burch, *Reuter's* correspondent, on January 5, 1946.

The clash of opinions on the whole question of empires has been intensified by Pandit Nehru's forthright declaration at the All-India States Peoples' Conference that the United States are underwriting the British Empire and that from the resultant Asian revolt would develop a third world war.

Democratic Representative Helen Douglas —representative of the internationalist wing —said: "There is no sense in berating the British or Americans for uncertainty on India's future."

Calling for a United Nations Organisation, strong enough to assure economic welfare of colonial powers, she described the unrest in India, Indonesia and Indo-China as one of the world's growing pains. "If we don't achieve, by international agreement, a mutually beneficial solution to ease the causes of unrest there is no hope for the world."

Mr. J. J. Singh, President of the India League of America, stated in New York in an interview: "It is not difficult to understand

why Pandit Nehru has made this forthright attack on the United States, or why the people of India are getting more and more disappointed with the United States.

"People of the world expect the United States to live up to the principles enunciated in the American declaration of independence and the Bill of Rights. But unfortunately the United States has not been able to live up to these lofty ideals.

"I have found that American politicians and members of the Government are very ignorant of the true state of affairs in all countries in Asia, excepting perhaps China.

"I recall one high United States Government official telling me: 'Maybe we are backing the wrong horse but it is too late to change.'"

II. WARNING TO PRINCES

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the All-India States Peoples' Conference, has issued the following statement to the press from Allahabad on March 5, 1946:

"In January last the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes made a declaration in the Chamber on behalf of himself and his brother princes guaranteeing civil liberties and recognising the immediate need for representative institutions and efficient administration and judiciary. I welcomed this though I pointed out at the time that the proposals for constitutional changes do not go far enough and should be based on recognition of responsible government. I welcomed it chiefly

because it represented a new approach and because of the assurance in regard to civil liberties which had been wholly or largely absent in most of the states. I believe some slight improvement did take place in regard to civil liberties in a few states but on the whole there has been no considerable change and I am constantly receiving reports of how civil liberties are being suppressed in many ways. This means that many of the princes are not keeping to their pledged word. All faith in what to say will vanish if action is at variance with assurance. This is a bad beginning for the big change that will inevitably come in the near future. I trust that all rulers of states will appreciate this and demonstrate to their people and to India that they mean what they say and are acting up to it.

"Civil liberties are important and are an essential prerequisite for any form of democratic government. But they do not take the place of representatives and responsible government. Therefore it must be remembered that the objective of the states' people is and must remain full responsible government. The same measure of democratic freedom must prevail in the states as in the rest of India. You cannot yoke together bullock with a swift horse. There is no difference between people of the states and the people of the provinces. Their future is one.

"Hyderabad State was not affected by the Chancellor's declaration and continues in most ways its medieval existence. The State

Congress is still banned and generally speaking it is an astonishing example of the middle ages having strayed into the twentieth century."

III. QUIT-KASHMIR MOVEMENT

The most burning topic of the day has been the quit-Kashmir movement launched by Sheikh Abdullah. The Kashmir Government mishandled the whole situation through sheer silliness. They arrested the Sheikh when he was out to meet Jawaharlal for important consultations from Srinagar to Delhi. Not only that. They also arrested Jawaharlal when he was on his way from Delhi to Srinagar to meet Sheikh Abdullah.

Here is an interesting extract from the editorial of the *Tribune* :

" Peace talks in order to be successful must be conducted in a tranquil atmosphere. Obviously Pandit Nehru's demand for the National Conference leaders' and workers' release, which was essential for the creation of a tranquil atmosphere, was a part of his peace-restoration plan. Even before his letter reached the Maharaja of Kashmir, it had been made plain by Pandit Nehru and many others on his behalf that the Pandit's visit to Srinagar was deliberately and definitely planned 'to end the complications' in the Happy Valley. But as the *Times of India* has put it, Messrs. Kak and Co. were 'intoxicated' with the success they had secured in their initial campaign against the National Conference movement and they came down with a heavy hand on

such a towering Indian personality as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, little realising what they were doing.

"In influence and authority Pandit Nehru is second only to Mahatma Gandhi. He is one of the mightiest international figures. Long after puny administrators, like Messrs. Kak and Co., are forgotten the giant patriot Pandit Nehru's golden deeds will be remembered with respect and admiration by his countrymen. It is this great Indian whom they insultingly called an 'outsider' and kept under arrest for several days—and that too when his object in proceeding to Srinagar was nothing but to apply balm to the lacerated heart of Kashmir.

"The Vice-President of the All-India States Peoples' Conference, Sheikh Abdullah, was arrested while he was proceeding to Delhi in response to the call of its President, Pandit Nehru. We have no doubt in our mind that if the planned meeting between the two leaders had taken place, events in Kashmir would have taken a different turn. Pandit Nehru was arrested while he was going to Srinagar in response to the call of duty. Again we have no doubt in our mind that if he had reached the capital of Kashmir his presence there and his contact with the Maharaja would have worked miracles and set things right in no time. Did not his visit to Faridkot end the agony of a month within a few hours? But Messrs. Kak and Co. seemed to be bent upon proving that they were mightier than not only Pandit

Nehru but also the tremendous democratic forces he represented."

IV. NEHRU-KASHMIR GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENCE

The telegram dated May 28, 1946, from Pandit Nehru to the Prime Minister: "Press reports indicate the trial of Sheikh Abdullah and others. Desire to organise proper defence. Request full facilities for this."

The telegram dated May 29 from the Prime Minister to Pandit Nehru: "Your telegram of 28th May. The case is before court which will doubtless grant facilities for defence permissible under law on application from the accused."

The telegram dated June 14 from Pandit Nehru to His Highness the Maharaja: "I am reaching Srinagar on the 19th with lawyers for Sheikh Abdullah's trial. I still hope that in the interests of all concerned the trials will be given up and Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues released. Such a step will lead to peaceful consideration of grave problems confronting Kashmir. I would gladly help in the task and can meet you for this purpose if you so desire."

The telegram dated June 16 from His Highness to Pandit Nehru: "Your telegram dated 14th. Cases are *sub judice*. Under rules any outside lawyers whom the accused may engage will have to approach the Chief Justice for permission to appear. Your coming here is inadvisable as it will only create com-

plications."

The telegram dated June 17 from Pandit Nehru to His Highness the Maharaja: "Received your telegram. I am surprised to learn that you consider my visit will lead to complications. I am going to Kashmir to help in putting an end to the complications already existing and easing the unfortunate situation which has already lasted too long. As such the State authorities should welcome my visit and give all facilities. Isolation and avoidance of personal contact lead to unnecessary difficulties. Hence my desire to study the situation for myself and to meet you. I have sent a long letter to you by a messenger."

The telegram dated June 17 from His Highness to Pandit Nehru: "Your telegram dated 17th. I note you are sending a letter by a messenger. My views regarding your coming here remain unchanged as I feel certain that at this juncture it will entail unfortunate consequences which it is the duty of all concerned to avert."

The letter dated June 16 from Pandit Nehru to His Highness: "My dear Maharaja Sahib,—Day before yesterday I sent you a telegram to the following effect: 'I am reaching Srinagar on the 19th with lawyers for Sheikh Abdullah's trial. I still hope that in the interests of all concerned trials will be given up and Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues released. Such a step will lead to peaceful consideration of the grave problems confronting Kashmir. I would gladly help you

in this task and can meet you for the purpose if you so desire.' I hope to reach Srinagar together with Mr. Asaf Ali, Diwan Chaman Lal and Mr. Baldev Sahai, ex-Advocate-General of Behar on the 19th evening by car from Rawalpindi. The immediate object of our going there is to arrange for Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah's defence in the trial that has been fixed for the 21st of June.

"I am much more concerned, however, as I have no doubt you are also with the general situation in Kashmir of which this trial is only a part. I should very like to be of some help in the solution of the problems that have arisen there. My main object in going is to endeavour to do so. I want, as you must also desire, peace and development in Kashmir. I feel, however, that it will not be possible to return to normality and peace, unless these trials are withdrawn and Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues are released. Naturally the present agitation that is still continuing in some form or other in Kashmir should also be stopped at the same time. This action will result in a proper and peaceful consideration of various problems which those interested in Kashmir have to face. I have, therefore, requested you in my telegrams and I would like to repeat the request here, that Sheikh Abdullah and others be released. As you are no doubt aware that Sheikh Abdullah was on his way to consult me here in Delhi when he was arrested. As soon as he is released we can confer together and endeavour to devise

means which would lead to a proper settlement.

"The problem of Kashmir is important enough by itself and some of us are intensely interested in it. At the present moment, however, it has an additional importance in the whole context of Indian states. The Constituent Assembly is likely to come into being soon and each state and more especially the major states will have to consider their representation in this Assembly. You are, I presume, aware of the popular demand put forward both by the Indian National Congress and the All-India States Peoples' Conference that representation in the Constituent Assembly should be by means of representatives elected by the people. All these and similar problems have to be faced very soon. It is obvious that difficulty inherent in these problems will be greatly increased if the situation in Kashmir is abnormal and the State is in conflict with the popular organisation there. Therefore in the interest of the State authorities as well as people, a rapid return to normality is eminently desirable.

"It is very difficult for me at this delicate stage of negotiations with the British Cabinet Delegation to leave Delhi even for a day. But I am so greatly interested in doing something for Kashmir that I have decided to leave Delhi and to try my best to help in finding a solution. A solution would be easy enough if you and your Government also desire it. I have suggested in my telegram that I would gladly

meet you to discuss these matters if you so desire. My visit to Srinagar on this occasion will necessarily be brief, as I have to come back as soon as possible to Delhi for talks with the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy. But even during this vist, it may be possible to lay the foundations of a settlement. If necessary, I can return to Srinagar a little later for further conversations.

"I am asking my colleague, Mr. Dwarkanath Kachru, to take this letter so that you may get it before my arrival in Srinagar and be acquainted more fully with my approach to this problem. I hope that my impending brief visit to Kashmir will yield results which are satisfactory to all parties concerned."

This letter was delivered at the Palace on the morning of June 19. Before any reply could be sent, Pandit Nehru came to Kohala and defied the ban.

V. JOURNEY'S END

The future of Indian states is interlinked with the future of British India.

An appeal to the people of India to rise above petty squabbles and internal bickerings which "benefit not us but our enemies" and to focus their entire attention on higher and more vital issues at stake, was made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a largely attended public meeting organised by the Bhopal State Peoples' Conference on April 24, 1946.

Pandit Nehru said that vital negotiations were now in progress in Delhi and no one

could predict what new development might take place in the course of the next few days or weeks.

"Curtain is very soon likely to drop on the final act of the great drama of our struggle for independence," he added.

He continued: "We are approaching the end of a long journey and climaxes and complications are bound to arise. But we must all realise that a new chapter is soon about to begin and we must understand and be prepared for a new India. Whatever part of India we may live in—whether in the states or elsewhere—the change is bound to affect every one of us ultimately. Our fortunes are closely interwoven."

An important part of the present developments, said Pandit Nehru, related to the Indian states which could not be isolated from the general picture.

Chapter Three

LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

When Maulana Mohammed Ali became president of the Congress in December, 1923, he induced Jawaharlal to accept the All-India Congress secretaryship for the year. He did not want to shoulder executive responsibility. But he could not resist Mohammed Ali.

"He had strong likes and dislikes," says Jawaharlal, "and I was fortunate enough to be included in his likes."

They got on well together. Nehru introduced the new system in his office of addressing everybody by his surname and dropped all honorifics. Munshis, Moulvis, Maulanas and Mahatmas vanished. Shris, Syeds, Shriyuts and Sheikhs faded away from the rolls of the Congress. Nehru wanted to set a good example. But he was not to have his way.

"Mohammed Ali," he says, "sent me a frantic telegram directing me as 'president' to revert to our practice and, in particular, always to address Gandhiji as Mahatma."

I. RIFT IN THE CONGRESS

Early in 1924 arose the quarrel between the swarajists and the Gandhi-ites. Jawaharlal was a Gandhi-ite, his father was a swarajist. Each of them had his own way and

followed his own light. Motilal did not try to win his son and he failed to win his son's *guru*. In December, 1924, the Congress session was held at Belgaum. And Gandhiji was its president.

"For him to become president," says Jawaharlal, "was something in the nature of anticlimax, for he had long been the permanent super-president."

Jawaharlal did not like Gandhiji's presidential address. It struck him as uninspiring. Nehru was again elected as the working secretary of the All-India Congress Committee. He was becoming the permanent super-secretary as Gandhiji has been the permanent super-president.

II. FIRST CITIZEN OF ALLAHABAD

The presidentship of Allahabad Municipality was thrust upon Jawaharlal much against his own wishes but he carried on the work efficiently and well. Within two years he was quite exhausted with the hard work that he put in for the welfare of the citizens. He was thoroughly fed up with the Civil Lines where all the Big Noises and the Little Noises lived and which consumed most of the money collected from poorer quarters. Jawaharlal did all he could for the denizens of the city.

III. VISIT TO EUROPE

In the autumn of 1925 Kamla, the wife of Jawaharlal, fell ill and grew worse day by day.

So he took her to Switzerland in March, 1926. It was his visit to Europe after thirteen years. It was a quiet and restful period of Jawaharlal's life. He spent it mostly in Switzerland.

Jawaharlal met in Geneva Shyamaji Krishnavarma, the noted Indian revolutionary. His pockets bulged with the old copies of his paper, the *Indian Sociologist*. His talk was all of the past. The walls of his room were covered with dust-laden books. They looked down sorrowfully on the intruder.

"Over the whole place," says Jawaharlal, "there hung an atmosphere of gloom, an air of decay; life seemed an unwelcome guest there, and, as one walked through the dark and silent corridors, one almost expected to come across, round the corner, the shadow of death."

Jawaharlal also met Mahendra Pratap, the other revolutionary. He was a delightful optimist. He lived completely in the air. He refused to have anything to do with reality.

"I was taken aback when I first saw him," says Jawaharlal. "He appeared in strange composite attire. He had various pockets in which he kept confidential documents. He considered it safe to carry his papers on his person."

"He seemed," says Jawaharlal, "to be a character out of medieval romance, a Don Quixote who had strayed into the twentieth century."

In February, 1927, Jawaharlal attended the

Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities as an official delegate of the Indian National Congress. Communist element was strong there. Almost all countries were represented. There Jawaharlal delivered the message of India and explained the deplorable economic exploitation of the country by the British ever since the Battle of Plassey.

Jawaharlal returned to India towards the end of 1927 and directly attended the Madras Congress where he presented a bunch of resolutions to the Working Committee—resolutions on independence, war danger, association with the League against imperialism, etc.—and nearly all of them were accepted, adopted and unanimously passed.

Chapter Four

THE POLITICAL PROPHET

Jawaharlal Nehru is a meteorologist of the political atmosphere. No statesman has studied the international barometer more carefully than Jawaharlal Nehru has done. Rarely have his prophecies gone astray.

Jawaharlal condemned Hitler in Germany, Franco in Spain, Japan in China, and Italy in Abyssinia at a time when the American capitalists were financing Japanese imperialism and the British were flattering Hitler. Jawaharlal turned down the invitation of Hitler to see him during the former's visit to Berlin at the time when Chamberlain hurried from London with his umbrella to Munich to woo and win the German Dictator.

And who was responsible for the Second World War? Britain or Germany?

Jawaharlal saw with his prophetic vision that the war was coming twelve years before the war started. The following extracts from the speech of Jawaharlal delivered at the Indian National Congress at Madras in December, 1927, are a remarkable piece of diplomatic information. Jawaharlal describes vividly the secret preparations made by Great Britain in the twenties which fathered Hitler and mothered the monster of the Second World War.

I. WHAT IS EMPIRE?

"What is the Empire but India? It comes to this. For the sake of India, to hold India under subjection, Sir Austin Chamberlain and the British Government cannot agree to the principle of disarmament or peace. It is well recognised in Europe specially by small nations who are always raising this question in the League of Nations that England is the greatest obstacle in the attainment of disarmament or world peace. I should like to indicate you some of the war preparations which England is making. You know that preparations for war are secret preparations. Nations do not advertise when they are going to prepare for war. Nonetheless when preparations are being carried on on a most extensive scale—on the sacle which England has been carrying on—it is impossible to hide them. So some of these things have come to light. The biggest and one of the latest things we have had for a number of years before us is the Singapore base. Why is England spending millions and millions of pounds and making the great naval base of Singapore? Surely it can only be a challenge directed against China and Japan and also against France, or if there is a war, there is a danger of France declaring war against England. Then England can threaten French possessions in Indo-China from Singapore. It is also directed against the Dutch East Indies, because England can force Holland to be neutral in case of war. It is directed partly at any rate against America and American domina-

tions in the Pacific, because in case of a conflict England could sweep down the Philippine Islands and take possession of them. It is chiefly directed against India because it is for the retention of India that all these things are done. Imagine that there is a struggle in India, then the Singapore base will facilitate the transport of troops from Australia to India and in many other ways will help the British in taking the offensive in India. So much for the Singapore base.

"Then we have another naval base which is being made at Trincomalee. We have also the great Royal Indian Navy which has recently been created with a flourish of trumpets. Whatever it may be, it is not an Indian Navy except perhaps that the expenses for it will come out of the Indian exchequer. This Navy is merely an adjunct of the British Navy to help the British Government against India although it may be at our cost. Again, I should like to draw your attention to the rapid development of the transport system in India specially in the North-West Frontier Province, Western Punjab and the north-east frontier in India. War nowadays very largely depends on transport. That is why the transport system has been perfected. Strategic railways have been laid all over the North-Western Frontier. You have heard of the Khyber Pass Railway. You will also hear subsequently of other strategic railways which are being built at great cost for military reasons. When military reasons are considered, cost is no consider-

ation. Military roads have been built from the Khyber Pass, from the Punjab, from the North-Western Frontier, right up to Karachi. Motor-lorry service has been started from Karachi to Peshawar. All this will facilitate the transport of troops and other materials in time of war. Although railways are there, railways might perhaps not be suitable—they may perhaps have strikes to contend against; therefore the whole military machinery of England is being made self-sufficient."

II. READINESS FOR WAR

"Now let me come to the north-eastern frontier in Assam. Recently you might have noticed in the papers that proposals are being considered that a part of Assam to the north-east of India may be converted into a new military province like the North-Western Frontier to facilitate the carrying on of war there, if necessary. For this purpose roads are laid, railways are projected between India and Burma and even between Burma and Assam. You may remember that the *Forward* of Calcutta was some time ago banned from entering Burma. The reason why it was banned was that it published and criticised something about these military roads in Assam, and the proposal to create a new military province. Let me go back to the North-Western Province where there is an extraordinary concentration of air forces and tanks. Those who know have told us, it is the finest and best equipment that any army possesses. Karachi has been created an air

base and other bases in the North-Western Province are being prepared so that the province is today full of activity for preparations for war. Two proposals have been made in England and also in Anglo-Indian journals in India which, although officials denied in Parliament, persist in getting publicity in the press. These periodicals are supposed to know what Government are doing and these proposals are of the greatest interest to us. The first was that a part of the British Expeditionary Force should be stationed in India because there is more danger of war in Asia than in Europe. Therefore, it is desirable that that force should be ready in India and should immediately start war-like preparations when necessary. The second proposal was that these highly developed mechanised forces should be used when there is any danger of war. The procedure that England should adopt was coldly stated in the English press to be not to wait for an attack but to make a forward spring into Central Asia across Afghanistan in one sweep. This was proposed because just in the same way Germans are supposed in their attack on France to have made a forward spring across Belgium."

III. WAR PREPARATIONS

"I should like to tell you one or two things also in connection with the war preparations of Britain, which a friend of mine has drawn attention to. He himself is a famous doctor and tells me that a large number of persons have received a circular letter from the Medi-

cal Military Department in India. This letter has been issued to every member of the Civil Military Department and he has been asked if he is prepared in case of emergency to serve as Medical Military Officer. Another letter has been issued to all doctors who have served in the last war asking them if they are prepared to join the Medical Reserve. Friends, I should like you to consider what all this means. When the resolution was moved in the subjects committee, some people thought that it was rather an unnecessary resolution. They have not heard of any military preparations and they do not know anything of the coming war. They think that our domestic problems are more important. They ask why we should waste time and energy over what might be happening in the North-West Frontier Province. I beg of you to consider whether these few facts are not sufficient to make you realise the great danger of war that exists in the world and round about us in particular. If such a danger exists, are you prepared to take no notice of it, but discuss only petty problems ?"

IV. TWO MORE THINGS

"Two more things I want to tell you in connection with these preparations. The recent treaty between England and Mesopotamia. The Anglo-Iraq treaty is one. And the second is the Amir's visit to India. I would not be surprised if the cordial welcome, the British Government extended to him, has not something to do with the desire of the British

Government to win him over. We are not in a position to stop the war, it may be. But at any rate we are in a position to make it clear what attitude India will take up and it is quite possible and conceivable that if India's attitude is clearly stated then England too may change hers. England might not dare to provoke war when she knows that India would not support the war but actually hinder the conduct of the war. Now this resolution lays down clearly that India has no quarrel with her neighbours. As to the declaration itself, it is our right to determine whether we shall join the war or not. Thirdly, another declaration follows and that is the most important. In case war comes and an attempt is made to exploit you, you will refuse to be exploited and to take any part in the war. I trust that if war comes and I think war may be nearer than most of us imagine—it may come in a year, two years or five years—the National Congress will follow up the lead given today. I also trust that the Indian people will rally round the Congress forgetting their petty differences and generally adopt the attitude which the Congress has suggested and refuse to participate in the war and suffer any consequence that might follow. I am convinced that if the Congress and the Indian people adopt this attitude they will emerge from that great ordeal much better, much freer and India will be a united and independent nation."

Chapter Five

PRESIDENT NEHRU

Nobody, with the exception of Mahatma Gandhi, have had such resounding admiration from the public as Jawaharlal Nehru. The slogans in his honour have rent the sky whereever he has made his appearance. Again and again the highest honour in the country has been thrust upon him and he has been president for four times.

Jawaharlal have had experience of lathi-charge during the boycott of the Simon Commission when even the jackals in New Delhi shouted "Go Back Simon!" In December, 1928, at the Calcutta Congress was passed the resoution for dominion status within one year. It was also ultimatum for complete independence if dominion status would not be granted within a year.

I. FIRST TERM

If Motilal persided over the dominion status Congress in 1928, his son got the honour of presiding next year at Lahore over the complete independence Congress. It was a unique honour in which the ex-president and the president-elect were father and son. The chronicles of the world do not have a parallel example. Surely the Nehrus have the greatest honour of pilotting the ship of Indian inde-

pendence.

"The Lahore session," says Jawaharlal, "remains fresh in my memory—a vivid patch. That is natural, for I played a leading role there, and for a moment, occupied the centre of the stage; and I like to think some time of the emotions that filled me during those crowded days. I can never forget the magnificent welcome that the people of Lahore gave me, tremendous in its volume and intensity. I knew well that this overflowing enthusiasm was for a symbol and an idea, not for me personally; yet it was no little thing for a person to become that symbol even for a while in the eyes and hearts of great numbers of people and I felt exhilarated and lifted out of myself."

A big satyagraha movement followed the Lahore session and thousands of brave souls went behind the bars. Jawaharlal also found himself in the Naini prison.

"My bed," says Jawaharlal, "was heavily chained up lest I might take it up and walk away, or more probably, to avoid the bed being used as a kind of scaling ladder to climb the wall of the enclosure."

The non-co-operation movement terminated in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, and Gandhiji's departure for London to attend the Second Round Table Conference.

II. SECOND TERM

Karachi session of the Congress in 1931 was held under the chairmanship of Sardar Patel. The resolution on the fundamental rights was

drafted by Jawaharlal and passed unanimously at the session. The peace of the Congress was marred by the execution of Bhagat Singh. It was regretted that Gandhiji did not make his release an important item in the Delhi Pact. As a symbol of disappoval a black flower was presented to Gandhiji by some " reds " at Karachi.

The illness of Jawaharlal's wife necessitated his return to Switzerland and there she died at Lausanne on February 28, 1936. A little before news had reached him that he had been elected president of the Indian National Congress for the second time. So he returned to India. On the way at Rome he had a curious experience. Mussolini was straining every nervy to meet Jawaharlal and Jawaharlal trying very hard to escape that calamity in order to save himself from being a victim of fascist propaganda.

" I remembered," says Jawaharlal, " how Gandhiji when he passed through Rome in 1931 had a bogus interview in the *Giornale d' Italia* fastened on to him."

In the struggle of the nerves between Mussolini and Jawaharlal it was the latter who won.

" Soon after my arrival in Rome, a high official called on me and gave me an invitation to meet Signor Mussolini that evening. It had all been fixed up, he told me. I was surprised and pointed out that I had already asked to be excused. We argued for an hour, till the time fixed for the interview itself, and then I had my way. There was no interview."

The Congress session was held at Lucknow and it was a great success. Jawaharlal delivered a remarkable address covering the entire international situation. Jawaharlal carried a whirlwind electioneering campaign and the Congress swept the polls in seven provinces.

III. THIRD TERM

Jawaharlal was re-elected president in 1937 and he exercised much wholesome influence in the formation of ministries. His sister, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, became a minister in the United Provinces.

In the summer of 1937 Jawaharlal visited Burma and Malaya. It was no holiday. Engagements pursued him everywhere. Nevertheless the change was pleasant. Nehru was pleased to meet the flowery and youthful people of Burma. Unlike the people of India they had no stamp of long ages upon them.

Subhas Bose was elected president for the Congress session in 1938 when the meeting was held at Haripura. Soon afterwards Jawaharlal decided to go to Europe. He wanted to see his daughter and also to freshen up his tired and exhausted mind. But Europe was not a place of tranquillity.

"There was gloom there and the apparent stillness before a storm," says Jawaharlal. "It was the Europe of 1938 when Mr. Chamberlain's appeasement was in full swing and marching over the bodies of nations, betrayed and crushed, to the final scene that was staged at Munich."

Trouble arose over the re-election of Subhas Bose and the rift took place between Gandhi and Bose. The war broke out in Europe in the summer of 1939 and things became very tense in India. Bose started the Forward Bloc but then suddenly disappeared to Germany and Japan. He started the Indian National Army and launched a war against Britain and America. It was an epic struggle and many books have appeared on the subject since the termination of war.

Abul Kalam has been the president all these years from 1938 to 1946. Quit-India movement was launched in August, 1942, and all the leaders were arrested. The members of the Working Committee were imprisoned in Ahmednagar Fort. There went our hero Jawaharlal. The Congress leaders were released in 1945 to discuss the Wavell Plan and have been out ever since.

IV. FOURTH TERM

During the visit of the British Cabinet Mission Abul Kalam was requested to continue president for another year but the work had been too much for him all these years and he firmly declined the offer. So Jawaharlal was elected president for the fourth term.

Jawaharlal was installed president for the year 1946 at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Bombay on July 8 to consider the Cabinet Mission proposals.

Chapter Six

NEHRU DISCOVERS INDIA

When the people discovered quit-India, Jawaharlal discovered true India.

The quit India movement of August, 1942, deepened Jawaharlal's faith in the people's determination to wrest freedom from the unwilling hands. It was as if Jawaharlal came abruptly at the fountain of Vital Energy which he had long been searching for. Consequently when Jawaharlal was imprisoned in the Ahmednagar Fort along with other members of the Congress Working Committee, he started digging into the horse-hoof pit until he came to the solid rock of Indian nationalism stuck deep in its past. That is how Jawaharlal discovered India and called his book *The Discovery of India.*

The book was written during his ninth and the longest term of imprisonment. It has the subjectivity of the *Autobiography* and the objectivity of the *Glimpses of World History.* Nehru digs deep into the cultural heritage.

I. INDIAN UNITY

"It would seem every outside element that came to India and has been absorbed by India has given something to India and taken much from her," he says. "It contributed much to

its own and to India's strength. But where it kept apart or has been unable to become a sharer and participant in India's life and her rich diverse culture it had no lasting influence and ultimately faded away sometimes injuring itself and India in the process."

II. NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

There is a strong conflict between his nationalism and internationalism. He attempts to co-ordinate these two different traits of his ideology and holds that internationalism presupposes a strong nationalism. "Nationalism," he says, "is stronger today than it has ever been. Many people think that nationalism has had its day and must inevitably give place to the ever-growing international tendencies of the modern world. Socialism with its proletarian background derides national culture as something tied up with a decaying middle-class. Capitalism itself has become progressively international with its cartels and combines. Trade and commerce, easy communications and rapid transport, the radio and cinema all have helped to create an international atmosphere and to produce the delusion that nationalism is doomed." "Yet," affirms the Pandit, "whenever a crisis has arisen nationalism has emerged again and dominated the scene, and people have sought comfort and strength in their old traditions." To support his view-point he carefully examines internationalism as it has flowered in Russia and says that "the appeal of the Fatherland is now much greater than the

appeal of the international proletariat."

III. DIVISION OF INDIA

"Some Hindus," he says, "talk of going back to the *Vedas*, some Moslems dream of an Islamic theocracy. Idle fancies! There is no going back to the past, there is no turning back even if this was thought desirable. There is only one-way traffic in Time." Pandit Nehru holds that any division of India on a religious basis as between Hindus and Moslems, as envisaged by the Moslem League today, cannot solve the minorities' problem and can at best be only a temporary arrangement. "Some division of India," he adds, "may be enforced, with some tenuous bond joining the divided parts. Even if this happens, I am convinced that the basic feeling of unity and world developments will later bring the divided parts nearer to each other and result in a real unity." He is at one with H. G. Wells in thinking that humanity is at the end of an age—an age of fragmentation in the management of its affairs, fragmentation politically among separate sovereign states and economically among unrestricted business organisations competing for profit. Pandit Nehru is, however, not blind to the fact that a large section of Moslems in India are emotionally worked up in a state of frenzy regarding the Pakistan demand and he says: "Group notions and conscious and sub-conscious urges count and must be attended to. It is at least equally clear that facts and realities do not vanish by our ignoring

them or covering them up by a film of emotion. They have a way of emerging at awkward moments and in unexpected ways" He holds that whatever may be the future of India, and even if there is a regular partition, the different parts of India will have to co-operate with each other in a hundred ways. "Even independent nations have to co-operate with each other, much more so must Indian provinces or such parts as emerge from a partition, for these stand in an intimate relationship to each other and must hang together or deteriorate, disintegrate and lose their freedom. There is no getting away from it, whether we are in favour of Pakistan or not, unless we are blind to everything except a momentary passion. . . . The alternative is stagnation, decay and disintegration, tending to loss of political and economic freedom, both for India as a whole and its various separated parts."

IV. LESSONS OF POVERTY

A divided India, each part trying to help itself and not caring for or co-operating with the rest, will, the Pandit holds, lead to an aggravation of the poverty of the people and a "sinking into a welter of hopeless, helpless misery." He says: "It is terribly late already and we have to make up for lost time. Must even the lesson of the Bengal famine be lost upon us? There are still many people who can think only in terms of political percentages, of weightage, of balancing, of checks. of the preservation of privileged groups, of making new groups

privileged, of preventing others from advancing because they themselves are not anxious to or are incapable of doing so, of vested interests, of avoiding major social and economic changes, of holding on to the present picture of India with only superficial alterations. That way lies supreme folly."

After pointing out the fallacies and dangers inherent in the two-nation theory on which the structure of Pakistan is raised, Pandit Nehru proclaims that "unity is geographical, historical and cultural and all that." "The most powerful factor in favour of a united India," he holds, "is the trend of world events." "Mr. Jinnah's thought," he asserts, "identifies a nation with religion. That is not the usual approach today But whether India is properly to be described as one nation or two or more really does not matter, for the modern idea of nationality has been almost divorced from statehood."

V. JINNAH AND JINNAHISM

While tracing the history of the minorities' problem in India, Pandit Nehru passes some stringent remarks against the "upper-class feudal leadership" of the Moslem League. He admires Jinnah for his political acumen and intelligence, but says that "with all his strength and tenacity, he is a strangely negative person whose appropriate symbol might well be a 'No.'" He regards the Qaid-i-Azam as a lone figure in the Moslem League, keeping apart from his closest workers, widely but distantly

respected, more feared than liked. " Mr. Jinnah shines as a lawyer-politician, as one who thinks that he holds the balance between nationalist India and the British Power. If conditions were different and he had to face real problems, political and economic, it is difficult to say how far his ability would carry him Perhaps he is himself doubtful of this, although he has no small opinion about himself. This may be an explanation for that sub-conscious urge in him against change and to keep things going as they are, of an avoidance of discussion and calm consideration of problems with people who do not wholly agree with him. He fits into the present pattern. Whether he or anybody else will fit into a new pattern it is difficult to say. What passion moves him, what objective does he strive for? Is it that he has no dominating passion except the pleasure he has in playing a fascinating political game of chess in which he often has an opportunity to say 'Check'? He seems to have a hatred for the Congress which has grown with the years."

Nehru regards Jinnah as a reactionary who, he says, despite his external modernism belongs to an older generation which was hardly aware of modern political thought or developments. " Of economics, which overshadow the world today, he appeared to be entirely ignorant. The extraordinary occurrences that had taken place all over the world since World War Number One had apparently had no effect on him. He had left the Congress when that organisation had taken a political leap forward.

The gap had widened as the Congress developed an economic and mass outlook. But Mr. Jinnah seemed to have remained ideologically in that identical place where he stood a generation ago, or rather he had gone farther back, for now he condemned both India's unity and democracy."

VI CRIPPS DRAMA

Being one of the principal actors in the "Cripps Drama" staged at Delhi in 1942 and the First Simla Conference in 1945, Jawaharlal has many hitherto unpublished stories to reveal regarding these "episodes" in Indian political history. He talks with first-hand knowledge of the various phases of the negotiations that ultimately ended in smoke, and that lends a peculiar charm to his narrative. "The open revolution," he says, "was a direct outcome of a sense of frustration that weighed heavily on people's minds. What happened in India in August, 1942, was no sudden development but a culmination of all that had gone before. Behind it all lay an intense feeling that it was no longer possible to endure and live under foreign autocratic rule." By quoting chapter and verse from the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, who drafted the fateful quit-India resolution, and by stating facts that were revealed to him by "persons in close touch with the whole revolt," Pandit Nehru places the responsibility, as is to be expected, for the "unfortunate episode" on an "autocratic and thoroughly ruthless government." "If the Government had had the capacity or desire to

understand and appreciate what moved the people so powerfully the crisis would not have arisen at all and India's problem would have been nearer solution."

VII. THE GOLDEN DISCOVERY

Starting with the probing of that great dust-heap called history and wending his way through an examination and analysis of events not yet relegated to the past, the Pandit ends his rambling roving "journey" on a not unfamiliar note of hope and optimism. "India will find herself again when freedom opens out new horizon and the future will then fascinate her far more than the immediate past of frustration and humiliation. She will go forward with confidence, rooted in herself, and yet eager to learn from others and co-operate with them. Today she swings between a blind adherence to her old customs and a slavish imitation of foreign ways. In neither of these can she find relief or life or growth . . . . True culture derives its inspiration from every corner of the world. The day of a narrow culture confined to a small fastidious group is past. We have to think in terms of the people generally and their culture must be a continuation and development of past trends, and must also represent their new urges and creative tendencies."

His historical survey, from the Indus Valley civilisation to the 1857 mutiny—which uprising he insists on labelling as "the Great Revolt"—is scholarly. He analyses personalities, discusses thought movements, traces social

practices to their origin, enquires into causes and effects, separates essentials from inessential, arranges events and episodes in the order of their historical importance and in the end sings praises of 'a special heritage for those of us of India, something that is in our flesh and blood and bones, that has gone to make what we are and what we are likely to be."

Chapter Seven

SAVIOUR OF I.N.A.

Jawaharlal Nehru will long be remembered as the saviour of I.N.A., because he was the first to start and pilot the "Save I N.A." movement. Throughout his imprisonment in the Ahmednagar Fort, Jawaharlal must have cogitated the fate of the Indian National Army with anxiety, because as soon as he came out, his first concern was about the I.N A. heroes who were rotting in British gaols, but no nationalist dared speak a word in protest. Before anybody had yet opened his lips, Jawaharlal spoke out coolly and candidly that India regarded the Indian National Army not as rebels but as heroes.

And with his magic wand Jawaharlal awakened the whole country as it is clear from the speeches of Jawaharlal delivered in those days. The following extracts are reproduced in order to make sure that the posterity will not forget the role of a saviour—next only to that of late Bhulabhai Desai—of Indian National Army.

"Had I been in the place of Subhas Bose," Jawaharlal declared recently, "I would have done exactly as he has done."

That is a great self-psychological study of Jawaharlal and something definitely to be remembered.

I. VEIL LIFTED

Commenting on the Government of India's *communique* on the treatment to be accorded to the Indian National Army, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in an interview at New Delhi on August 28, 1945, said : "I am glad that the Government of India have issued a *communique* in regard to the prisoners of the Indian National Army formed in Malaya in 1942. The veil at last has been lifted, but facts are still hidden. I would suggest that those facts or many of them, should be released to the public. What is the total number of officers and prisoners of this Army in the various forts, camps and prisons of India ?

"What action has already been taken in regard to any of them ? What were the original circumstances which led to the formation of this Army in Malaya, for instance ?

"It has been stated, with what authority I do not know, that they were left there to shift for themselves. Many points of constitutional law arise and these should be considered carefully by competent experts of those laws. It may be maintained that any such army, formed in the circumstances then existing and recognised by a foreign power as an independent army gains status of a combatant force and its prisoners should be treated as ordinary prisoners of war. I am not expert enough in constitutional law to give an opinion, but I am sure this matter is worthy of earnest consideration.

"The main point, however, is not one of law. It depends on the approach to the

question. Is it a completely English and non-Indian approach, or is it an Indian approach? I can understand and appreciate the English approach, but I can also understand and not only appreciate but deeply feel the Indian approach, which, I think, must be common not only in the civilian population of India but also in the British Indian Army.

" The war is over happily for all of us and problems must be viewed in terms of peace and not of war. Political consequences of any act of servere punishment must be taken into consideration and there is no doubt that such political consequences might be deep and far-reaching. In this connection, a possible comparison common, though not wholly apposite, is that of the Maquis in France. When the German army wanted to deal with the Maquis as rebels of the Petain Government, General Eisenhower very rightly issued a stern warning to them and told them that the Maquis must be treated as combatant forces and allowed the privileges of prisoners of war.

" There can be no doubt that this Indian National Army functioned as regular, organised, disciplined and uniformed combatant force. There can be no mistake in this. It was unfortunate that many of them were misguided enough to support a wrong cause, but it should never be forgotten that they had no desire or intention of supporting that cause as such but were moved by their passion for India's freedom. I have no doubt in my mind that the vast majority of the Indian men and officers of

the British Indian Army will appreciate generous treatment to their old comrades in arms."

II. IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR INDIA

A demand that the Government of India should clarify the matter regarding the Indian National Army, who fought against the British along with the Japanese, was made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru while addressing workers of the National Conference at Srinagar on August 19, 1945.

Pandit Nehru said that about twenty-five thousand Indian soldiers, mostly Sikhs and Moslems, contacted the Japanese after the fall of Singapore, etc., and formed the Indian National Army to fight against the British. He affirmed that they were misguided, but whatever they did was done by them out of patriotic motive. Most of them had, however, been arrested and were reported to be in Indian gaols. What treatment the Government of India would mete out to them was a matter of great concern for Indians. "No doubt, these people committed a mistake, but, if they are treated harshly, it would create an important issue for India."

III. SUPREME TRAGEDY IF THESE MEN ARE LIQUIDATED

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in an interview to the *Associated Press* at Srinagar on August 19, 1945, clarifying his remarks about the future of Subhas Bose's Indian National Army, said:

"There is one matter which has been pain-

ing and troubling me for some time, but to which I have made no reference so far because any mention of it might have been misunderstood. But now that the war has ended, there is no such reason for remaining silent on that issue. This concerns the twenty thousand or more prisoners of the so-called Indian National Army, which had been formed in Malaya and Burma. I was of the opinion three years ago and am still of the opinion that the leaders and others of this Army had been misguided in many ways and had failed to appreciate the larger consequences of their unfortunate association with the Japanese.

"Three years ago I was asked in Calcutta what I would do if Subhas Bose led an army into India on the plea of liberating India. I replied then that I would not hesitate to resist this invasion even though I did not doubt that Subhas Bose and his Indian colleagues and followers were motivated by the desire to free India and were in no way mere tools of the Japanese. Nevertheless, they had put themselves on the wrong side and were functioning under the Japanese auspices. No person could come to India in this way or under such foreign auspices.

"Therefore, whatever the motive behind the people they had to be resisted in India or outside.

"But the situation has completely changed with the end of war. And now a very large number of officers and soldiers of this Indian National Army, as it is called, are prisoners and

some of them at least have been executed.

"Though proper information is lacking. It is reliably stated that very bad treatment is being given to them in prisons and forts, where they are kept and many of them live the shadow of death. I do not wish to complain to the British for the strict military rule. They could plead justification for treating with rebels in any way they like. But as an Indian and as one representing in this respect the view of almost all Indians of whatever party or group, I would say that it would be supreme tragedy if these officers and men are liquidated by way of punishment.

"Whatever their feeling and mistakes may have been in the past, and these were serious, there can be no doubt that they are a fine body of young men, taken as a whole, fine officers and fine rank and file and that their dominating motive was love for India's freedom. At any time it would have been wrong to treat them too harshly, but at this time, when it is said that big changes are impending in India, it would be a very grave mistake, leading to far-reaching consequences, if they were treated just as ordinary rebels, the punishment given to them would in effect be a punishment on all India and all Indians and a deep wound would be created in millions of hearts. In this matter, fortunately, there is no communal question, for these officers and men are Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs.

"From such accounts as had come to me, it appears probable that this Indian National

Army first took shape when Singapore was almost surrounded by the Japanese and most of the British Army left by boat. The Indian Army in Malaya was, therefore, left stranded by the fortunes of war and was completely at the mercy of the Japanese.

"At that time a junior officer of the British Indian Army, Sardar Mohan Singh, apparently got into touch with the Japanese Command and organised the remnants of the Indian troops there, which amounted to nearly seven thousands. Although Mohan Singh, to some extent, co-operated with the Japanese, they resisted their encroachments in many ways and refused to be a tool in their hands. After many months, matters came to a crisis and Mohan Singh, who had proved a very efficient and brave organiser, was arrested by the Japanese and disappeared completely. Probably, he was executed by the Japanese.

"This in itself shows the curious and anomalous position of this Indian National Army and how its leaders were continually trying to prevent the exploitation of their men for Japanese imperialist purposes. How far they succeeded in this I do not know. But the motive underlying their action comes out clearly and it is important.

"In view of all this, I earnestly trust that nothing will be done in regard to these prisoners of war which will lead to an additional festering sore in India's mind and heart. With the end of war, the immediate exigency past, large considerations should prevail."

IV. IS SUBHAS BOSE WAR CRIMINAL?

An American journalist asked for clarification of Pandit Nehru's attitude to Subhas Chandra Bose who, he said, was not probably dead but alive in Saigon. He said that Bose should be treated as a war criminal because his men fought and killed many Americans and he extorted money from the poor in Burma and Malaya. An Indian correspondent intervened and said that no case of the Indian National Army having fought the American forces had ever come to sight. His investigations showed that "Bose's government levied some kind of tax on Indians only."

Pandit Nehru reiterated his views on Subhas Chandra Bose. He resented the suggestion that Subhas Bose should be dealt with as a war criminal. Pandit Nehru said: "Personally I should be very happy if all persons considered as war criminals are brought to trial and facts come out. But they should be tried by American and Indian judges as well. And in my list there will be many high officials sitting in Delhi who will be war criminals. The judges should be impartial." Pandit Nehru said that he knew Subhas for over twenty years, he was the president of the Congress. A most unusual thing happened and an ex-president of the Congress was turned out of the organisation. That was before the war. He also formed a party to attack the Congress. Then came the war and from India he went to Germany and then to Japan. So far as Pandit Nehru knew the Indian National Army had already been

formed even before Bose came to Japan. He did not find anything unusual for a supposed legal government to levy taxes. As for extortion, Pandit Nehru alleged, there was encugh in India. Free gifts were collected for war funds and millions had been extorted. Three millions died of starvation in Bergal. As for Bose he had never doubted his passion for freedom.

Chapter Eight

WHAT IS NEHRUISM?

Gandhism is an established factor in Indian politics, but recently Jawaharlal has also come to have an "ism" of his own.

What is Nehruism?

Nehruism is Gandhiji's philosophy of non-violence, treated as a political strategy rather than as a moral principle surcharged with democratic ideals of the West.

"India accordingly lies at the parting of the ways," says Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. "On the one hand it is under the patriarchal guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand it is already indulging in industrialism which stands at the opposite pole. In other words, the question is whether the journey should be on the limpid waters of a still lake or on the tossing waves of a flowing river in high floods. Gandhi has often reported that Jawaharlal is his heir. What can the latter inherit as such? The former has only his loin-cloth, his dangling watch and his long stick. It is, therefore, well and good that the so-called heir has repudiated his heirship. What the heir of Gandhi should inherit is not his material asset but his 'real property'."

There is little doubt that Jawaharlal has inherited this "real property," but like a good successor he has augmented his possessions

through ideas of his own. His utterances have a character of their own. Here are a few examples of Nehruism :

I. ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

" The August movement was the symbol of India's growing strength and I am glad that the masses of India accepted the Government's challenge to crush the Congress—the embodiment of India's will to freedom—and rose equal to the occasion," Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru thundered addressing a public meeting at Azamgarh town.

He made scathing criticism of the personnel of the Indian Civil Service and said these permanent servicemen though spending practically the whole of their life would not learn or unlearn anything and referred how the bungling bureaucracy, the Bengal Government, and the Government of India were responsible for the death of thirty to forty millions of people in Bengal due to starvation.

Pandit Nehru also said that the problem of demobilised soldiers could not be solved by such an inefficient government.

He added, " Swaraj is the right of all and not of a few. In a Swaraj Government poverty will be a thing of the past."

II. FLAME OF FREEDOM

In the course of a statement issued from Allahabad on March 4, 1947, Pandit Nehru said, " Friends and colleagues in Jubbulpore have pressed me to visit the city in view of

the situation that has arisen there, owing to the strike of the signalmen and others, belonging to the Indian Army. Such facts as are known, have been supplied to me. I gather that the men on strike have remained completely peaceful ; further that on February 28 a considerable number of them were injured some seriously, by some kind of a bayonet charge made upon them in their barracks. The strikers' demands were for better treatment, in regard to rations, amenities, etc., and no inequality of treatment between Indian and British soldiers. There were also some political demands.

"Such demands should not normally be made the basis of a strike. They involve large issues and indeed, in the last analysis, the issue of India's freedom. What steps should be taken, and when, in regard to this fundamental issue in India, it should be for the nation to decide, through its leaders and representatives. It is undesirable for any group to force the issue.

"In regard to the demands for better treatment and no differentiation every Indian must invariably sympathise with them. The soldiers in other armies have been through many years of gruelling war-time experience. In all armies, there is a feeling of weariness and a desire to go home. We have seen recently strikes in the personnel of the American and British armies.

"In armies there is the ever-present feeling of resentment at the differential treat-

ment accorded to Indians, officers and other ranks alike. What was meekly submitted to previously, can no longer be borne, for the Indian people today are proud and virile, and determined to be free. That flame of freedom runs through us all, whether we are civilians or army men. It is in this context, that every situation has to be judged. We all want discipline in the army, for an army without discipline is no army. But discipline today must be considered in this new context, and not as a slave discipline of former times. The problem thus becomes one of India's freedom and a re-fashioning of our civil and military structure, in the light of that freedom. Merely to suppress and punish in the old way is futile, for it makes the problem more acute.

" I trust that the military authorities in India will have this picture of India today in their minds and function accordingly. To Indian soldiers I would say that their cause is ours. It is the nation's. Our ultimate object is the freedom and independence of India. We are happy that the old barriers between army men and civilians in India are breaking down.

" This new situation brings new responsibilities on all of us, and we must not function light-heartedly, or else we waste the opportunity that awaits us.

" Soldiers and civilians alike should indulge in non-violence, for the obvious reason, apart from other reasons, that violence will benefit our opponents, who have superior violence on

their side.

" So whatever our struggle might be, it should be conducted peacefully, and in a disciplined manner. It is right that civilians should express their sympathy for legitimate demands, but they must realise that violence is of no help.

" We want no victimisation of our men, in the Navy, the Army or the Air Force. They are brave young men, and even if a few go astray in a moment of excitement, a wise policy is to deal with them leniently, and in a friendly manner. In any event, so far as we are concerned, we shall try our best to prevent victimisation, but it is obvious that we can make no promises, give no guarantee, for only a free India can do that. One promise we can, and will give, to struggle for India's full freedom and independence, till this is achieved."

III. NO PAKISTAN IN ONE THOUSAND YEARS

" The year 1946 is going to be a very important year in the history of India, when big problems will be finally solved and momentous decisions taken with the help of the irresistible might of the people. To achieve our object, we will have to stand up united, and in a well-disciplined manner, sinking all our petty differences for the sake of the greatest cause of the country's freedom," said Pandit Nehru addressing a gathering of over a lakh of people in Queen's Park, Cawnpore, on March 8, 1946.

Pandit Nehru said that he had been touring all over India to gain first-hand knowledge of the conditions of the people in the country, as it was not possible for him to know all about the country from newspapers alone, sitting within the walls of the Ahmednagar Fort. He wanted to know the effect of the 1942 movement on the masses. He saw crores of people and found that India was changed. He found that the country was a gunpowder magazine which would burst into flames with the touch of a single spark. Never before in his public life of thirty years, had he witnessed such an enthusiasm among the people. But there was lack of discipline. His tour revealed that, while on the one hand there was a surging tidal wave of freedom, on the other, there was an urgent need of keeping within bounds. The unprecedented enthusiasm among the people made him happy while the lack of discipline among the people worried him.

Continuing, Pandit Nehru criticised those who spent huge amounts of money and resorted to other corrupt practices to secure a seat in the Assembly. He referred to the Congress election manifesto, and said that the Congress had fought the elections not to adorn the chairs, but to free India from foreign domination. The League and the Hindu Mahasabha had no definite programme for the country whatsoever. The Hindu Mahasabha, he said, was a lifeless body and they need not bother about it. The Moslem League had

raised the slogan of "Islam in danger" to sidetrack the main issue.

"I can say with confidence," emphasised Pandit Nehru, "that the kind of Pakistan Mr. Jinnah demands, can never be achieved by him even in one thousand years."

He added that when asked by the foreign press correspondents, to define Pakistan and how it was to be defended, Mr. Jinnah was reported to have said that the British forces would have to remain here for a considerable length of time to defend Pakistan and Hindustan. "I fail to understand this," said Pandit Nehru. Pandit Nehru added that every individual and community should have full freedom in religious matters, and be given equal opportunities to make progress. The only question before the country should be how to achieve freedom of the country, and it was absurd to raise the communal question.

Pandit Nehru said that only big and powerful countries could exist in the world. The demand for Pakistan would weaken the country by disintegration and it would remain enslaved. The League leaders were begging for Pakistan at the door of the Britishers. The end of British rule was in sight. It would come soon whether they liked it or not. The British Government had lost all power to rule over India; they could not manage the country. He referred to the Bengal famine, and said that he shuddered to think that thirty-five lakhs of people could die, owing to the inefficiency of Government. How could a

government under which such a state of affairs existed, remain? It was, therefore, essential that the reins of administration should be in the hands of the people, but this could be possible only when the people were united. Pandit Nehru referred to the trouble in Delhi on the occasion of victory celebrations, and criticised the action of the people in attempting to set fire to the Municipal Office. He said they could have demonstrated their protest against the celebrations in a peaceful manner and should not have destroyed their own property. These factors weakened their struggle for independence.

"We are on the threshold of freedom, we have to prepare ourselves for it. We have to face big problems. There is no time to stop. Let us, therefore, strengthen the Congress and march onward unitedly like a disciplined army. The Congress is the only body which could fight for freedom," he concluded.

IV. PLANNED COLLECTIVISM

Writing in the June (1946) issue of *Asia*, America, Pandit Nehru said: "Not only must equal opportunities be given to all, but special opportunities for educational, economic and cultural growth must be given to backward groups so as to enable them to catch up to those who are ahead of them."

Let this be done, emphasised the Indian leader, for "any such attempt to open the door of opportunity to all in India will release enormous energy and ability and transform the

country with amazing speed."

Pandit Nehru said, in the same vein India also necessarily must demand an economic system which fits in with such equality and encourages it. He declared today's problems in India, "complicated as they seem, are essentially due to an attempt to advance while preserving the political and economic structure more or less in tact."

Economic change is necessary, he said, and "that change will have to be in the direction of democratically planned collectivism." Pandit Nehru emphasised this does not mean private property would be abolished, but it would mean "public ownership of the basic and major industries" and "co-operative and collective control of the land."

The All-India Congress Committee party leader said that in India "it will be necessary to have, in addition to the big industries, co-operatively controlled small and village industries," and, he declared, "such a system of democratic collectivism will need careful and continuous planning and adaptation to the changing needs of the people."

While asking for a principle of expanding the "productive capacity of the nation in every possible way" and absorbing all the labour power of the nation in some activity or other," Pandit Nehru asked that "as far as possible there should be freedom to choose one's occupation."

He said this would not result in an equalisation of income among the people, but "there

will be far more equitable sharing and a progressive tendency towards equalisation."

The result would cause the caste differences that exist today to disappear and would cause class distinctions "which are essentially based on differences in income" to begin to fade out.

V. THE SOUL OF NEHRU

It is not easy to imagine the extreme misery of a sensitive nature like Nehru's. It is completely paralysed by the death of democracy in Britain. The British crimes, follies, shallownesses, and the British pomp and glitter have quite set his teeth on edge. Nehru's feelings are of humanity, with all its failings, it is true, but yet of humanity. Nehru asserts the importance of human life in himself and in the world around him.

Britain has become all the more indifferent since it has seen through the tinsel of non-violence. Britain believes in nothing, not even herself, except the memory of a ghost of empire. The black-robed presence of empire is a reminder to every one of the fact of death.

There is no question but that Nehru is right. Britain's smiles hide exploitation. Britain's philosophy may be inevitable, blameless, and irrefutable. But it is the negation of freedom. It is death. Hence, Nehru is a continual fear to Britain, a reminder of her crime. It is a mistake to regard Britain a hardened criminal like Germany. The speeches of Nehru give a smart lash to the conscience

of Britain. She cannot show off a harlot's cheek, beautified with the plastering art. Nehru's criticism wrenches the British soul with remorse. The British Parliament often gives us the most beautiful prayer of a stricken soul:

> " . . . What if this cursed hand
> Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
> Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
> To wash it white as snow ? "

But the British Parliament knows that her prayer is worthless. Her offence is rank. It smells to heaven. The British Parliament is still trammelled by the enjoyment of the fruits of her crime.

" My crime is past," says the Parliament. But what does that avail? Britain still has the Chinese crown and the Indian queen! The British dilemma is profound. And Nehru alone knows its profundity. He finds Britain enmeshed by the chain of causality linking her with her crime. And this chain might perhaps Britain have broken except for Nehru and Gandhi. And all would have been well—but for Nehru and Gandhi!

Jawaharlal is a superhuman presence whose consciousness is centred on complete independence. The British diplomats cannot understand him. He is a creature of another world. With a heart as soft as that of a newborn babe, he has sinews with strings of steel. Nehru is the fine flower of a soul in agony.

His eye is a-glitter with the intoxication of true patriotism. A halo of divinity hedges about Nehru. He is very human, but he has seen through humanity. The reactionaries are all leagued against him. They are puzzled by his fervour. When Jawaharlal is out of the gaol, Jinnah becomes a queer shadowy character. Nehru is not merely a firmly-drawn figure of flesh and blood. He is a spirit of penetrating intellect—and cynicism—and misery. He wrings the mother's heart out of the masses and hurls them on the brink of martyrdom. He is a superman among men. And he is a superman, because he has held converse with God. His consciousness works in terms of Truth and the Negation of Cynicism. He has seen the truth, not alone of India, but of humanity, of the universe.

British imperialism is an element of evil in the state of Hindustan. The poison of imperialism spreads outward among the things of flesh and blood. It eats like metal into the metal of society. The nationalists are helpless before the very inactivity of bureaucracy. They fall after one another like victims of an infectious disease. Nationalism is strong with the strength of sacrifice but the demon of imperialism is no ordinary enemy. Futilely we try to get imperialism out of our country. But the monster strides with a cynical smile.

It is Nehru who is right. What he says and thinks of imperialism is true. There is no fault in his logic. It is unwise to offer him a battle. For in the warfare of truth, justice

and patriotism he has all the guns ready against the reactionaries at home as well as the imperialists abroad. He makes us realise the misery of living death in the midst of life. Nehru acts with a fine steadiness of purpose. Although time is out of joint, he bridges the gulf by rational action.

There is a perfect rhythm in Nehru. We see the swell and surge of passion pressing onward through him. He has the mighty crash and backwash of a tragic figure. He has to fight hard against the poison of negation and nothingness. The demon of imperialism generates in him a withering and brutal sarcasm. His mind reflects swift changes. Imperialism does not let him see long with the eye of humour. The whole universe is blackened for him by thoughtless repression. Light goes out. It leaves utter vacancy.

Nehru, like Hamlet, is a dualised personality. He wavers between grace and the hell of cynicism. His life reflects the see-saw motion. Analysis holds the fascination of giddiness. Like Buddha, Nehru is scorched by the shattering experience of universal misery. He is tired of the world of domination in all its glitter and superficial delight. Nehru is lovable and gentle. Nehru is beautiful and noble. There are no trivial things of life to blur his mortal vision. His mind attuned to the exquisite music of the divine soul. His body is cup of melody that can hold no bitterness. Everywhere in his life beauty dethrones ugliness.

Alone in the gay glitter of London, you find Nehru absorbed in thought. Silhouetted against brilliance, you find him drooping. The weight of seething poverty sits heavy on his shoulders. He has "that within which passeth show." Sometimes he feels that his "too too solid flesh" would melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew. World is an unweeded garden, and Nehru finds it strewn with things rank and gross in nature.

To any man who can see the light is extinguished from the things of the earth. And Nehru is a man who does see the misery of the "have-not" people. This knowledge intensifies his pain. The sufferings of Buddha were nothing as compared with the sufferings of Nehru. Buddha had seen animals eaten by animals. But in the twentieth century men are being eaten by machines. No wonder, capitalism harrows the soul of Nehru. It freezes his young blood.

India's honour is foully smirched with imperialism. Forgetfulness is impossible. Nehru cries against fate that has laid on him the heavy responsibility of righting India's wrongs. Nehru's soul is sometimes sick to death. In the deserts of his mind there is one flower of complete independence, and the sweet scent of hope that springs from it. It alone keeps verdant the glories of earth and heaven.

The outstanding quality of Nehru is his endless capacity for action. He works himself into a towering passion in the frenzy of an

all-out patriotism. Nothing can snap his will. Upon the wings of emotion he traverses all the interstellar spaces between Hell and Heaven. Hell and Heaven are but spatial embodiments of the lowest and the highest emotions. The British glory and glamour only agonise him with the remembrance of what they once were to him. There is a continual process of self-murder in Nehru's mind. It is well to sentimentalise his personality.

Inside and outside British gaols the shadow of death broods over Nehru. The horror of humanity doomed to perpetual misery has increased the sensitivity of Nehru's mind. He lives by an intuitive faith. And he draws this intuitive faith from a timeless reality within the soul. In spite of eternal torments for the downtrodden, which he has to shoulder day after day, there are no torments of eternity for him. In spite of his exalted position, he does never for a moment forget the true reality of a physical self. Man is but a quintessence of dust, waiting for the worms of death.

Chapter Nine

FURROWS OF FREEDOM

" Treat us as equals and we will treat you as equals ! " That is a fair and square request that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made to the British Government regarding the formation of the Constituent Assembly which he is convinced must be a completely sovereign body. And if the British will not willingly invest it with sovereignty, the Indians are nevertheless determined to snatch sovereignty forcibly.

This paramount declaration was made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a press conference at the Congress House, Bombay, on July 10, 1946, during the special session of the All-India Congrese Committee. Here for the fourth term, Pandit Nehru took over the chairmanship of the Indian National Congress thus breaking his own record.

Jawaharlal stated that the Congress will enter the Constituent Assembly completely unfettered by agreements. The nationalists must be free to meet all situations as they arise. Britain must treat India as an equal in all things pertaining to the independence of India. The patriots must not permit Britain to dictate a treaty.

" We are absolutely free to act," says Jawaharlal.

I. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

As regards the Constituent Assembly he reiterated his earlier statement that the Congress has made no commitment whatever either in regard to the long-term or the short-term plan of the Cabinet Mission except agreeing to go into the Constituent Assembly. But, obviously, once the Congress went into the Constituent Assembly, its main objective would be to see how to make it a success and in so doing, the Congress would certainly have to take into consideration the situation created by the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16. But, added Pandit Nehru, the Constituent Assembly would never accept any dictation or any directive from the British Government in regard to its work. The only two factors which limited the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly were those relating to the minorities and the Indo-British treaty.

The minorities' question was an Indian problem and the British had no say in the matter. As regards the Indo-British treaty, the Congress would not accept anything imposed by the British Government. If the Government sought to perpetuate any vested interests, the Congress would resist it.

Asked to amplify his statement in the All-India Congress Committee that the Congress had made no commitment in regard to either the long-term or the short-term plan except to go into the Constituent Assembly Pandit Nehru said : "As a matter of fact if you read the correspondence that has passed between

the Congress President and the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy you will see in what conditions and circumstances we agreed to go into this Constituent Assembly. The first thing is we have agreed to go into the Constituent Assembly and we have agreed to nothing else. It is true that in going to the Constituent Assembly, inevitably, we have agreed to a certain process of going into it. Election of the candidates to the Constituent Assembly and what we shall do there, we are entirely and absolutely free to determine. We have committed ourselves to no single matter of anybody. Naturally even though one might not agree to commit himself, there is a certain compulsion of facts which makes one accept this thing or that thing. I do not know what that might be in a particular context. But the nature of compulsion of facts would be not of the British Government's desires or intents but how to make the Assembly a success and how to avoid its breaking-up. That will be certainly a very important consideration. But the British Government does not appear there at all."

II. SOVEREIGN BODY

When the Congress had stated that the Constituent Assembly was a sovereign body, Pandit Nehru said : " The Cabinet Mission's reply was it was more or less yes, subject to two considerations. Firstly proper arrangement for minorities and the other a treaty between India and England. I wish the Cabinet

Mission had stated both these matters are not controversial. It is obvious the minorities' question has to be settled satisfactorily. It is also obvious that if there is any kind of peaceful changeover in India it is bound to result in some kind of treaty with Britain.

" What exactly that treaty will be I cannot say. But if the British Government presumes to tell us that they are going to hold anything in India because they do not agree either in regard to minorities or in regard to treaty we shall not accept that position. We shall have no treaty if they seek to impose anything upon us and we shall tear up any treaty if they try to impose. If they treat us as equals and come to terms there will be a treaty. But if there is the slightest attempt at imposition, we shall have no treaty.

" In regard to minorities it is our problem and we shall no doubt succeed in solving it. We accept not outsiders' interference in it and certainly not the British Government's interference in it and therefore, these two limiting factors to the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly are not accepted by us.

" How to make the job in the Constituent Assembly a success or not is the only limiting factor. It does not have the slightest difference what the Cabinet Mission thinks or does in the matter."

III. GROUPING OF PROVINCES

Referring to grouping Pandit Nehru said: " The big probability is, from any approach

to the question, there will be no grouping. Obviously, sections will decide against grouping. Speaking in betting language there was four to one chance of the North-West Frontier Province deciding against grouping Then group 'B' collapses. It is highly likely that Assam will decide against grouping with Bengal although I would not like to say what the initial decision may be since it is evenly balanced But I can say with every assurance and conviction that there is going to be finally no grouping there, because Assam will not tolerate it under any circumstances whatever. Thus you see this grouping business approached from any point of view does not get on at all."

Pandit Nehru also explained how provincial jealousies would work against grouping. Firstly, he pointed out " everybody outside the Moslem League was entirely opposed to grouping. In regard to this matter the Moslem League stands by itself isolated : applying that principle you will find in the North-West zone there is a kind of balance, more or less even, of pro-grouping and anti-grouping.

" Secondly, entirely for other reasons, non-political, non-Congress, non-League, there is a good deal of feeling against grouping with the Punjab both in the North-West Frontier Province and Sind for economic and other reasons. That is to say, even a Moslem Leaguer in Sind dislikes the idea of grouping with Punjab because he fears that the Punjab will dominate Sind, Punjab being a dominant party in that group and more aggressive and advanced in

some ways. Apart from the imposed discipline from the Moslem League, both in the Frontier and in Sind, the people were unanimously against grouping because both these provinces are afraid of being swamped by the Punjab."

Asked when the provisional national government would be formed at the centre, Pandit Nehru said: "I cannot just peep into the future and tell what is going to happen. For the moment we are somewhat engaged in the Constituent Assembly elections. But remember this, that the Constituent Assembly is not going to put up easily for long with the kind of care-taker government that exists today. There is bound to be conflict between them. In fact, the care-taker government has no stability, nor is there any possibility of its long continuance. How and when and what shape the new government will take I cannot say, it will be just entering into phantasy."

When his attention was drawn to the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Moslem League Council at Bombay, Pandit Nehru said: "Whatever the Congress does is always intended to create new situations. We do not follow other peoples' situations. I am glad that the Moslem League has realised that we have created a new situation. We propose to create many further new situations. What we shall do if the League decides to do this or that we will see what the conditions then are and decide accordingly."

IV. UNION CENTRE

Dealing with the powers of the proposed Union Centre, Pandit Nehru said : " According to the Cabinet Mission's proposals there are three or four basic subjects in it, *i.e.*, defence, foreign affairs, communications and the representatives. What their stand today is, I do not know. But obviously we cannot accept that position. The real difficulty is that apart from the rulers' position, the governments in the Indian states are so unrepresentative that a proper procedure must be adopted to make them representative and representatives of such governments should go to the Constituent Assembly."

The Congress President's attention was drawn to some of the bigger states, like Hyderabad, not demobilising their wartime armies. Pandit Nehru said: "It is highly undesirable for all these small, separate armies to continue. They are bound not to continue under the Union Government of India. There will be only one Central Army: maybe during the intervening period of transition, some of these may carry on."

V. CONSTITUTIONAL QUAGMIRE

Since the Congress accepted the long-term plan and rejected the short-term plan, the Moslem League has been caught in the mud. The League had accepted both the plans and Lord Wavell had committed himself to a pro-League politics, but as a result of Congress statesmanship, the Anglo-League conspiracy was

defeated, and the disappointment of the British Cabinet Mission has been traced to the "innocent" mistake committed by the military Governor-General.

But the League is very much perturbed, because Mr. Jinnah has not been allowed by the Congress to nominate all the five Moslems to the Interim Government and he has not been permitted by the British to form the whole government even in the absence of the Congress. Mr. Jinnah has shown his teeth, because he thinks that the British have broken their pledges to the League and Congress has accepted the long-term plan only conditionally, but as yet Mr. Jinnah has been able to bite neither the British nor the League.

The Moslem League threatened to boycott the long-term plan. Their threat has materialised. Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, the deputy of Mr. Jinnah, cut a very sorry figure in Indian and foreign circles by declaring that the League had accepted the long-term plan on condition that it was not a sovereign body. That made it clear to everybody that Moslem League was out to perpetuate British thraldom on India.

The Sikhs have created a real hurdle, because the cause of the Sikhs is just. The Sikhs have been herded together in the Pakistan and offered only four seats in the Constituent Assembly. Therefore, the Sikhs boycotted the Constituent Assembly in spite of the advice of Pandit Nehru to elect their representatives.

VI. SIKHS GO ASTRAY

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru speaking on July 21, 1946, at the Ramlila Grounds, New Delhi, said that circumstances had forced the British Government to agree to India's demands of summoning a Constituent Assembly for framing a constitution for a free and independent India. The Congress, Pandit Nehru added, was entering the Constituent Assembly with the object of working it out and if they found that they were unable to achieve their purpose they would withdraw from it and wreck it.

If the Constituent Assembly was once set up, continued Pandit Nehru, it would become a completely independent organisation. It would be composed of elected representatives from different provinces. If the British Government or the Viceroy wanted to destroy it, they could not do so. It could only be done by Indians themselves. It was his firm conviction that after the setting up of the Constituent Assembly no outside power could destroy or crush it.

Pandit Nehru said that during the last twenty-five years people had been following the Congress in the hope of achieving full national independence. Congress today was much powerful than ever before. He admitted that there was internal weakness in the Congress, but felt that it should not be allowed to stand in the way of their progress when they were engaged in fighting British imperialism. All that was required at this critical period of Indian history was unity and strength of the

people. The Congress was a platform for all shades of opinions and it was working for the common goal of independence of the country.

Pandit Nehru referring to the action of the Sikhs who withdrew their nomination papers to the Constituent Assembly said that in his opinion the Sikhs had not done the wise thing. They had done it in haste and anger. They had their grievances in the grouping system, but their hasty action would not take them forward.

Pandit Nehru said that he had been elected president of the Congress at the most critical period of the country. His responsibility was very great and the task ahead of him difficult. At first he was shirking to shoulder the heavy responsibility. He had to spend sleepless nights and do a great deal of heart-searching before deciding to accept the presidentship. Pandit Nehru said that he would be able to go on working as long as the people continued to help and co-operate with him. It was, in fact, the strength and love of the people which moved him forward.

Pandit Nehru did not know what was ahead of them. They wanted to move forward by peaceful means. The Government on one side was trying to come to a settlement with the Indians and on the other making all arrangements to meet any possible upheaval in the country. The Congress, he said, was also ready to throw itself into the struggle against British imperialism, if necessity arose.

VII. NEHRU AND SIKHS

The Political Freebooter of the *Tribune*, a highly intelligent journalist whosoever he be, has made a delightfully psychological study of Jawaharlal out of the recent Sikh-Nehru muddle. Having been an author of several books on Jawaharlal Nehru, I know that the remarks of the Freebooter are so thoroughly correct that I cannot help quoting the whole column:

It is a pity the rejoicing over this inclusion of a Punjabi in the Congress Working Committee should have been marred by the development of what the *Mahratta* used to be so fond of calling a "Gilbertian" situation with regard to the Sikh withdrawal from the constituent body. The withdrawal was said to have been permitted by Jawaharlal Nehru and there were thanks all round for him from the leaders of the "Panth." Embarrassed by the thanks Pandit Jawaharlal has already issued two statements to the press making a situation already Gilbertian even more so. In the first of these Pandit Jawaharlal very rightly complains:

"The postal strike and the partial telegraph strike have helped in adding to the obscurity. Long-distance telephone conversations, which were only partially heard, have not helped much in keeping me informed of what was happening."

The situation no doubt is such. The mails, the telegraph, the telephone all perfectly Gilbertian—and one might add the international affairs more chaotic than ever after the Atom Bomb test. Indeed about the postmen's hartal,

I can testify from my own experience for I have received no bills and no reminders for more than a week and the freebooters are all rejoicing over the much-longed-for moratorium which but for the hartal they could never have got the sharks to agree to. They would quite willingly let the Constituent Assembly go to dogs if the moratorium can be prolonged yet awhile!

Though the dak situation (and the Atom Bomb) cannot be absolved of all responsibility, the Congress President does not mean to acquit himself either. In the second statement he has in fact owned that he was at fault and he has apologised—not to posts, telegraphs and trunk telephones—but to his colleagues of the Working Committee and forsworn for future all interest in parliamentary work which must remain the care of Patel and Azad.

* * * *

Of one thing there can be no doubt—Jawaharlal had never intended a Sikh withdrawal from the Constituent Assembly nominations. Another thing equally certain is that if he had just said "Don't withdraw" Partap Singh (and possibly certain others) would never have withdrawn. But he held forth at length on pros and cons and on all possible aspects and consequences. Things got woolly and wobbling. No offence. What did Gunther say in his great panegyric on Nehru? "He is subtle, complex, infinitely cultivated . . . steeped in doubt," "like a lecture at Oxford," "the victim of competitive emotions," "occasionally unsure of himself," "divided in judgment." Yes, in Gunther's

language he was being modern and subtle and complex. Woolly and wobbling are just the same thing in my Punjabi idiom (struggling awkwardly for expression through English words). I confess we Punjabis not being "modern and complicated" are not equal to the intricacies of the Nehru idiom and do not find it easy to adjust ourselves to a leadership "steeped in doubt". I frankly confess I have often been bewildered not only by the longish statements issued from the Congress headquarters but even by the long and tangled "resolutions"—which as Pothan Joseph, prince of columnists, once pointed out in a delightful essayette seldom "resolve" upon doing this or that. The communist has his thesis, a longish affair this too, but after an analysis of the situation it is supposed to lay down a clear-cut course of action. The Congress "resolution" imitates the "thesis" in being prolix but is very often wanting in the formulation of a clear-cut course of action. To my Punjabi mind such compositions often become rigmaroles rather than resolutions.

* * * *

Mahatma Gandhi commended one such composition—on the war policy of the Congress in the early phase of the war— and said Jawaharlal (to whom the authorship was ascribed) was an artist. Whether it was the Gilbertian art that the Mahatma had in mind or some other, I fancy all such artistry goes past the Punjabi mind. I must say such artistry does not consist with generalship, and has

no place in a great captain's orders of the day for his men. These must be simple, brief, unambiguous direc·ives. Jawaharlal's composition is often far different, and I am told at times people in his own province have complained. Once, in the early forties if I remember aright, when a controversial proposition had been announced for an All India Congress Committee meeting, Pandit Jawaharlal made an elaborate examination of all the factors of the complicated situation in a series of seven or eight signed articles in the *Herald*. Then the U.P. Congressmen met to consider the question, and after Pandit Jawaharlal had addressed them a somewhat Punjabi-minded worker got up and said : " Sir, I read all the eight articles in the *Herald*, and I could not know whether you would expect me to support the proposition or to oppose it. I listened attentively just now for I thought at last you were going to give a clear lead. But now I feel it was just a ninth article in the series, and I am no wiser as to what I should do." The situation, it is said, did not improve much for the simple soul after two further speeches by Panditji made in response to frantic appeals for something clear-cut.

It is not surprising therefore that there should have been complete misunderstanding of each other—about Sikh withdrawals—when the parties expressed themselves in idiom so widely divergent. I only hope Partap Singh will before long have trained himself sufficiently to be able to act as interpreter. That would be

ample justification for his being on the new Working Committee.

VIII. CONGRESS TAKES THE OFFICE

When Lord Wavell invited the Congress to form the National Government, they were honourably bound to do so as the majority party in the country. Sikhs responded to the call of the Congress and readily withdrew their boycott of the Constituent Assembly. But the Moslem League remains the real hurdle. Immediately after receipt of the Viceroy's invitation, and the Congress Working Committee's approval thereof, Pandit Nehru proceeded to Bombay and had an interview with Mr. Jinnah on August 15, 1946. The talk for co-operation ended in smoke and Pandit Nehru explained the situation lucidly in a press conference the next day.

Pandit Nehru said: "A few days ago I received a communication from the Viceroy, when I was at Wardha, which stated that in concurrence with the British Government, he (the Viceroy) proposed that the Congress President should make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government. It is fairly a simple communication and there is nothing more nor less than what I have stated. What that communication implies, it is for you to draw your conclusions.

"The Congress Working Committee decided to inform the Viceroy that I would be prepared to make proposals for the formation of the Interim Government. I had no other com-

munication with the Viceroy in regard to this matter apart from the one mentioned above.

"The position today is somewhat vague, though undoubtedly the announcements made on behalf of the Viceroy and on our behalf do make a considerable advance. When I saw the Viceroy last at Delhi, there was no talk nor mention of this Interim Government. Some people imagine that there was some kind of a secret understanding between the Congress and the Viceroy in regard to this matter, but I say there is nothing of the kind."

Pandit Nehru added: "The present offer to the Congress to form the Interim Government does make a difference. The Viceroy has made a new kind of approach. There is a psychological difference. Unlike previous occasions, we are now asked to form the entire Government, no doubt with the co-operation of others but taking the responsibility for it. Now it is not a question of individuals being picked and chosen by an external authority. Maybe all this ends in our being caught in a trap: maybe that it leads us much further in the direction we want to go. We would eliminate all the obstructions in our way. But in any case we have to be very wary.

"Meanwhile we thought it desirable that we should do our utmost to gain the co-operation of all, and more especially the Moslem League in forming the Government. There are obviously considerable differences in the outlook, approach and objectives between the Congress and the Moslem League. It would

have been rather futile to imagine that all those differences would suddenly vanish. Nevertheless, we did hope that our differences apart, we might still be able to co-operate and possibly the process of co-operation might help in resolving those differences."

Pandit Nehru, then, referred to the correspondence exchanged between him and Mr. Jinnah and his meeting with Mr. Jinnah yesterday and said: "We had, as usual, a friendly talk. Mr. Jinnah put forward the Moslem League's case which everyone is well acquainted with. In brief, he criticised both the so-called 'long-term and short-term plan. Mr. Jinnah felt that the latest resolution of the Congress Working Committee did not differ from the previous stand taken by the Congress. Perhaps he was right."

Pandit Nehru regretted that his meeting with Mr. Jinnah yesterday did not bring the Congress and the Moslem League politically nearer to each other. "For the present I can say nothing more except that I am going to Delhi tomorrow. I shall meet the Viceroy and we shall discuss the question of the Interim Government further. The fact that we have agreed to make proposals does obviously put certain responsibilities on us. It takes us many steps further. We have taken this decision with the full responsibility and not in any light-hearted manner, because obviously all manner of consequences may follow.

"I would like you to realise that there are possibly many hurdles still and not to imagine,

as some do, that there is no further difficulty left about the formation of the Provisional Government. It may well be formed for there may still be some obstruction or difficulty."

Pandit Nehru made it clear in answer to a question that the Congress had accepted the Viceroy's offer to form the Interim Government which would not merely be the Executive Council but a free Government.

Pandit Nehru said: "Strictly legally speaking there will be no change as regards the Viceroy's position, but in practice I trust he will be a kind of constitutional head. But if unfortunately, the Viceroy exercised his veto, it would lead to trouble. In fact, it cannot be exercised. If he does, it will have major consequences."

Answering a question Pandit Nehru said that the question of certification of any bill by the Viceroy would not arise inasmuch as there cannot be a conflict between the Government and the Assembly. "I cannot conceive of such a conflict," he said, "because any Provisional Government must carry the Central Assembly with it. If it does not, that Government must go."

Pandit Nehru continued: "In fact the Provisional Government should function as though it was responsible to the Central Assembly, such as it is. It is obvious that the whole Provisional Government will be a different set-up psychologically and will approach both domestic and international problems from a different point of view. While so doing, it is conceivable that it may come into conflict with the

British authority in England or elsewhere. At present, one cannot say anything specific in regard to this matter."

Asked if the Congress formed the Interim Government without the Moslem League's co-operation and the League started some kind of direct action, would it not lead to the Congress being used to put down the League, Pandit Nehru said: "If the League starts some kind of direct action, obviously the Government will face that direct action—either come to terms with it or oppose it. There is no other course. If the Government is strong, direct action goes under, but if the Government is weak, the Government will go under."

Pandit Nehru was, then, asked what would be the attitude of the Provisional Government towards Indian states. He said: "The states as such do not come within the scope of the Provisional Government except in regard to many common problems between the states and the rest of India. But obviously such a Government, apart from the common problems, will be intensely interested in the formation of democratic governments in the states and it will try to further that end."

Pandit Nehru continued: "The decision of the Congress Working Committee to form the Interim Government was a vital decision and yet perhaps an inevitable decision in the sense that it follows a certain chain of happenings. From the Congress point of view, it was certainly a novel step. That step could not be taken normally without previous reference to

the All-India Congress Committee and in any event that reference will have to be made and the final decision will rest with that Committee. At the same time, we felt that it would not be right for us to postpone action, in view of the various developments and happenings both in this country and abroad.

"The Congress decision to agree to form the Interim Government involves many other consequences internally for the Congress. We have given some thought to this, but we have not decided upon any definite line of action, since we are not sure whether the acceptance of the Viceroy's offer would lead to something final or not.

"I might tell you that even now, we have not finally decided about the details of the proposal we have to make to the Viceroy. Since the Congress joining the Provisional Government is something entirely new, both for the Congress and the country, we have to consider what relations our Executive should bear to that Government and whether any member of the Executive could belong to that Government. The Working Committee has come to certain conclusions in regard to these matters."

Pandit Nehru emphasising the importance of maintaining the revolutionary character of the Congress organisation said: "The Working Committee attaches greatest importance to the internal organisation of the Congress, because it feels that whatever future may hold for us, the real sanction behind us is the Congress organisation. Therefore we must do our

utmost not only to keep it going but to strengthen it, widen it, and make it more disciplined and ready for action, when action may be necessary.

"Therefore, in considering all these governmental affairs we have to think all the time of the effect of each such development on the Congress organisation and how we should adapt that organisation to these changing circumstances, so that it may not come into conflict and yet the most important thing of all, it should retain its revolutionary outlook. Obviously, some kind of change at the top by itself does not mean much. It may be the precursor of other changes big and small.

"It is because we look upon the Viceroy's offer from that point of view that we thought in terms of accepting the Viceroy's offer to form the Interim Government. Big changes have to come later. The formation of the Provisional Government and the convening of the Constituent Assembly are by themselves only initial steps in a certain process. If we think that those steps lead in the right direction then we take them.

"But if we think that they may come in our way we must avoid them. We have now come to the conclusion that these two steps, namely, the convening of the Constituent Assembly and the formation of the Interim Government lead us and help us to proceed in the right direction which will bring about fundamental changes in India. It is because of this, that we have decided to go into the Constituent

Assembly as well as, if other things are satisfactory, to form the Provisional Government."

Pandit Nehru continued: " Naturally when one takes such a step one wishes for the largest measure of co-operation possible. In spite of all that had happened during the last three or four weeks—many statements some of them violent and threatening violent action against the Congress—we felt it our duty to make an earnest effort to get that co-operation not only from the Moslem League, but from others too. That co-operation is being offered to us by almost every group or community in India except, I regret for the moment, the Moslem League. In the circumstances, however, it is obvious that we cannot stand still because of this unfortunate lack of co-operation from the Moslem League. So far as we are concerned that door of co-operation will always be open. We shall, whatever we may do, always be keeping in view this larger view-point and proceed with the largest measure of co-operation."

Chapter Ten

FROM PRISONER TO PREMIER

Here is an interesting development of political ideas in the mind of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru from August, 1945, to September, 1946:

I. ARE YOU AFRAID?

"Ever since my release, wherever I go, I ask the people: 'Are you afraid?'

"The answer is 'No'!

"When I ask them: 'Are you strong enough?'

"I always get the answer: 'Yes'!"

* * * *

"If we allow our enthusiasm to be dissipated by petty quarrels and sectional factions, we may go down never to rise again."

* * * *

"Do not touch the feet of leaders! It is a pernicious habit, a sign of slavery!"

II. NOTHING BIG GOING TO HAPPEN

"Some say that something big is going to happen. There are, however, so many factors unconnected with the immediate issues which lead one to think that nothing big is going to happen. The fact that large numbers of our people are in prison or detention is significant itself."

III. ONE THING GOVERNMENT DREADS

"I realise that every Government considers it its duty to maintain itself and to resist and suppress any attacks upon it. Of that I made no complaint. But there are certain limits of decency and humanity which no Government or its officers are supposed to transgress. All these limits were passed in these past years in India and numerous cases of almost inhuman and atrocious behaviour have come to light. A Government which values its fair name should investigate all such charges and punish those who are found guilty. But our present Government is afraid of nothing more than of such an investigation and tries to prevent it."

IV. DELICATE MOMENT IN INDIA'S HISTORY

"The British regime is beginning to end. The curtain is now being rung down. This is a very delicate moment when we should muster all our strength and shake off all symptoms of weakness. We must be prepared to face new problems as they arise. We can do this only if we are united and strong. We stand at the door-step of our freedom. Only one push is required to reach our cherished goal. The question before us is not whether we should ratify or reject any one particular resolution. It is the vital question of the freedom of India."

V. NO HINDU RAJ

"In the free India to come there would be

no Hindu Raj as the Hindu Mahasabha dreamed, nor a Moslem Raj, nor a Sikh Raj. It will be a people's raj—a raj of all, Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Christians and others—with power resting in the hands of the people as a whole."

VI. CONGRESS GOAL

"The Congress would not be satisfied only by occupying all the seats in the assemblies and the councils. It would feel satisfied only by getting full control of the administration."

VII. DUTY AND DISCIPLINE

"I want every yong boy and girl of India to become a soldier for the cause of the independence of the country. By a soldier I mean a disciplined and honest worker who can serve the country and keep the honour and prestige of the motherland. Discipline is necessary especially so when the struggle for the independence of our motherland is essentially non-violent. A few disciplined soldiers are far more useful to the country and to the struggle than a crowd of a thousand undisciplined men."

VIII. FREEDOM FOR 400 MILLIONS

"We are passing today through a very critical time. There are greater responsibilities ahead of us. There are many knotty problems. It is our duty to keep pace with the changing times. Various problems that confront us today need immediate attention and I am sure if we can face them sincerely, courageously and dispassionately, we will achieve freedom in no

time.

"Our duty is to look after those who are in the mud huts and improve their condition. There lies our salvation, there lies our welfare."

IX. NO COMMITMENT

"It is wrong to think that the Congress has accepted either this plan or that plan. Nothing has been accepted. The Congress has only decided to enter the Constituent Assembly to frame a new constitution for a free and independent India. There was no other commitment of any kind."

X. HIGH SEAS AHEAD

"However old the ship and however feeble the pilot, we can brave the high seas and face the future with confidence, especially when there are millions of willing hearts and hands to help."

XI. CHIRIA-KHANA

"India will throw in her weight in the cause of peace. In doing so she will take an independent stand and not act as a satellite. India's foreign policy will affect the whole world . . . . International problems are intricate and complex. From what one heard as to what is happening in the Paris Peace Conference or at the U.N.O., it all looked like a *chiria-khana* (place where birds are kept)."

Chapter Eleven

THE FIRST PREMIER OF INDIA

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru formed the first National Government in India on September 2, 1946. The portfolios were distributed as follows:

External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Defence—Sardar Baldev Singh.

Home including Information and Broadcasting—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Finance—Dr. John Matthai.

Communications (War Transport and Railways)—Mr. Asaf Ali.

Agriculture and Food—Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

Labour—Mr. Jagjivan Ram.

Health, Education and Arts—Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan.

Legislative, Posts and Air—Mr. Syed Ali Zaheer.

Industries and Supplies—Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar.

Works, Mines and Power—Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose.

Commerce—Mr. C. H. Bhabha.

Pandit Nehru and his colleagues in the new Government brought a new sense of urgency to the Imperial Secretariat, where they were at their desks early on the second day of assuming office. Their early arrival gave a jolt to many

officers and staff, who responded by plunging into their daily tasks with new energy and promptitude. Cutting across the tradition built up by the Executive Councillors of the past regime, members of the new Government were back in office after lunch—a further reminder to the staff that the leisurely ways of the past had been left behind.

The new feel in the general atmosphere was exemplified by the respectful attention that the visitors in the Indian dress received from chaprasis, who previously took little notice of any one not clad in European costume.

Encouragement of khadi and removal of untouchability, it is felt, must form part of the long-term programme. Mahatma Gandhi had correspondence and personal discussion with the Viceroy and with the previous Finance Member, Sir Archibald Rowlands, on the subject of removing the salt tax and it is believed that the official view then given was that this was a decision which must be left to a popular government.

A number of other decisions, including fixation of the salary of the members of the new Interim Government, and the future policy to be followed with regard to the release of I.N.A. officers sentenced by the Courts Martial are likely to be kept pending till the Government is in full strength. One main problem which has confronted the new members is believed to be the appointment of foreign experts.

I. BROADCAST TO THE NATION

Pandit Jawaharlal delivered his first broadcast to the Indian Nation on September 7, 1946. In the course of his message he said :

" We shall look to the common and forgotten man in India and seek to bring him relief and raise his standard of living. We shall especially try to help those who are economically or otherwise backward. Today millions lack food and clothing and houses, and many are on the verge of starvation. To meet this immediate need is an urgent and difficult task and we hope other countries will help us by sending food-grains.

" This old and dear land of ours is finding herself again through travail and suffering. She is youthful again with the bright eyes of adventure, and with faith in herself and her mission. For long years she had been narrowly confined and had lost herself in brooding. But now she looks out on the wide world and holds out her hands in friendship to the other peoples of the world, even though that world may still be full of conflict and thoughts of war."

A friend sent the following message to Jawaharlal :

" May you weather every storm, first pilot of the ship of state. Bon voyage."

To this Jawaharlal replied as follows in this broadcast :

" A cheering message but there are many storms ahead and our ship of state is old and battered and slow-moving and unsuited to the age of swift change. It will have to be scrapped and give place to another. But, however old

the ship and however feeble the pilot, when there are so many millions of willing hearts and hands to help, we can brave the high seas and face the future with confidence."

II. THE TASK BEFORE NEHRU

In a press conference on September 2, 1946, Jawaharlal said:

"If we are co-operating with those whom we have opposed all along in Government, much more so inevitably we seek the co-operation of every Indian in this country, because after all the foreign elements in this country are temporary residents here, or are temporarily in office. Inevitably, they have to go, not physically—they are welcome to stay on in India—but in their official capacity; because obviously India is going to be run by Indians for the benefit of Indians, not to the injury of others, I hope anywhere, but certainly for the benefit primarily of the people who live in this country, to whatever religion or creed they might belong, in whatever province or part of India they may live."

He hoped in passing that the practice of giving titles in India would cease. "It has always seemed to me rather degrading to the individual to have these titles attached to his name, unless of course they represent some kind of literary excellence or some professional qualification. That is a different thing, but otherwise this business of titles is a relic of an age, which, I hope, the world is rapidly leaving behind.

"So whether you call us honourables or not, the fact is that we shall consider ourselves chief

servants of the Indian people and the moment we forget that, we shall not be worthy of the job that has been given to us.

"We shall keep our eyes and ears close to the soil of India to see not only how people living in the big houses in New Delhi feel about anything, but how the villagers and factory-workers see everything."

Pandit Nehru called for a practical outlook. "What are we aiming at?" he asked.

"Freedom? Yes," he replied.

"Higher standard? Yes. But we are ultimately aiming at feeding, clothing, housing, educating and providing better sanitary and healthy conditions for four hundred millions. If you approach it in that concrete way, the problem becomes a little more concrete, even though it is vast. Then you can limit it, if you like, to what you can do in five years or ten years' time and put definite objectives—we must produce so much food, clothing, provide so much education and housing, etc., because we cannot achieve everything simply because there is a change in Government or simply because we desire it."

"Normally," he went on, "I have been charged with the External Affairs Department and the Commonwealth Relations Department—the two joined together. But for the moment, maybe for ten days or so, I am supposed to be in charge of all the other departments of my absent colleagues, namely, the portfolios of Defence, Finance—of which I know hardly anything at all—Commerce, Health, Education, Industries

and Supplies. A queer collection!

"Today we started off in the Finance Member's room and for the space of ten or fifteen minutes I discussed 'high finance.' I went on to the Commonwealth Relations Department, where we discussed commonwealth affairs.

"Later in the afternoon I went to the External Affairs Department and spent an instructive hour there and then finally wound up with the Defence Department and tried to understand the various branches of the War Establishment in India. So I have had a varied education today and in the course of the next day or two I hope to tackle Health, Education, Commerce, Industries and Supplies. Obviously this is more for my own education than for anything else! In the main, my job is going to be External Affairs and Commonwealth Affairs.

"As I was just saying in Hindustani, we propose to function very much as a cabinet responsible as a whole for everything that we do. The practice so far here has been for various departments to function separately and reporting directly to the Viceroy and sometimes, when some conflict arose, or some matters had to be considered together, the matter was referred to the Viceroy's Council, but normally they were separate departments.

"Of course, it is an odd situation and it has its difficult as well as humorous aspects when a group of persons representing a revolutionary tradition and dynamic organisation, representing thus for the permanent opposition in India which often took to methods of combating the perma-

nent Government of India, come into close touch on a co-operative basis with a static organisation which has not been known in the past to move up rapidly as to make its movement very perceptible to outside observers.

"Nevertheless, we have entered into this business with every desire to further it co-operatively, in order to achieve our objective—the complete and full independence of India. It will be a very great achievement in itself and also in the manner of doing it, if we can do it peacefully and co-operatively.

"What will happen, the future will show, but it is because we believe in it that we have undertaken this task and we hope to proceed on those lines."

Appealing for the co-operation of every Indian in this country, he said: "We are all going to remain here and even though we may get irritated with each other, it is obvious we have to live together and we have to work together and co-operate together. Therefore, it becomes incumbent on all of us to seek that wider co-operation and make every effort to achieve it, because after all the problems before us are so vast and intricate even apart from that major and dominating and primary problem of achieving Indian independence. The other problems—call them economic if you like—are allied problems tremendous in their significance—how to raise the standard of living of four hundred millions. Therefore, it is from the point of view not only of the theoretical objectives but the practical objectives in terms of the millions of human

beings in India that we have to look at these problems.

"Naturally, in the future we shall have to have close contact with the press, because we have to live in close contact with our people. We shall go to them as we have gone to them in the past so much and meet them face to face at public gatherings, perhaps some of us may not have quite so much time for that in future. Nevertheless, we shall have to go to report to them, because they are our masters and we are their servants, though you might add some appellation like 'honourable' to our names.

"I do not know what effect a fairly lengthy residence in New Delhi might have upon us because it has been my experience that it has a very numbing effect on individuals, and results in a weakening of their intellectual faculties and certainly their physical faculties. Maybe, we might be affected that way, but I hope, not. New Delhi, as it has been constituted thus far, is something unique in India and something entirely apart from India. It does not represent India, although it contains many eminent Indians."

"How far it is possible to change this atmosphere of New Delhi and bring it more into line and more into touch with the real Indian atmosphere, I do not know and it is up to all of us to try to do so.

"Anyhow, whether New Delhi changes or not, we have to think in terms larger than New Delhi, of the towns and the factories and the market places of India. If we are a popular

Government, we have to carry the people with us. We cannot function even for their good without the goodwill of the people. Therefore, it becomes essential for us to keep in touch through the press, personally and otherwise. It may be that we might have recourse to broadcasting. Certainly we will, but unfortunately the radio is not sufficiently developed here. There are relatively very few listeners and the listeners are normally newspaper readers. Nevertheless we should take advantage of every avenue of approach to our people and sometimes, it may be, to the wider public of the world."

III. THE NEW ERA

Here are some interesting extracts from a recent article of H. N. Brailsford :

More than a century has passed since Lord Macaulay predicted in a famous phrase that Indians would one day demand "European institutions." That would be, he declared, "the proudest day in English history." And now the proudest day has come ; the demand has been granted. If we in England have not yet abandoned ourselves to rejoicing, it is only because the future is clouded by the angry revolt of the Moslem League. In spite of this we felt that the formation by Pandit Nehru of the first National Government was one of the greatest and happiest events in India's history and Britain's.

It has happened in the customary British manner within the shell of traditional institu-

tions and without a break with the past. But no one fails to understand that the decisive step has been taken in the transfer of power. The orderly process has begun, which will end with the withdrawal of the British army and the recognition of India's independence in a negotiated treaty.

How has the miracle happened? Indians are still puzzled and somewhat incredulous. It has seldom happened in the world's history that an empire has relaxed its hold over a subject nation in this spontaneous way. Is the surrender genuine?

It has been a more gradual process than Indians commonly realise. I am old enough to remember the hey-day of imperialism in the last years of the nineteenth century. This was the epoch of Kipling, Cecil Rhodes, Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Roberts, the epoch of the River War for the conquest of the Soudan, the Bœr War and Fashoda.

Poets sang of empire; heroes were shady adventurers who brought an African chief by trickery under the flag; what interested people above all else was the grabbing of territory and the founding of Chartered Companies to exploit it.

That noisy and vulgar age is long since over. With Wells and Shaw, Galsworthy and Aldous Huxley came a new mental climate. Thoughts turned inwards and interest shifted to social problems. The reconciliation of the Bœrs by the grant of self-government was the turning point.

With the First World War the horizon widened, and it began to be realised that the Age of Empires was drawing to an end and the Age of World-Government dawning. The old pride in empire which used to inspire Englishmen round the turn of the century is a faded memory today. Englishmen are still proud of their association with the free dominions, but they feel no complacency about the still dependent colonies.

If Indians do not realise how profoundly British outlook has been transformed in the course of forty years, the reason may be that the English in India are always a generation behind the rest of their countrymen in their political thinking.

The change corresponds to the shifting of the social balance of power in the home country. For the old ruling class India was their inherited estate. Mr. Churchill thinks of it as he may think of the ancestral acres of Blenheim Part but the new rulers of England are free from these romantic associations.

Even more decisive is the change that had begun to transform the economic relationship, even before the Second World War. On the evidence of the trade balances, India had ceased to be a tributary country. Today the home country is her debtor, and the debt can be paid only by the export of machinery which will be the realistic foundation of India's economic independence. The old imperial relationship—the exploitation of a backward country as a source of raw materials—is coming visibly to an end. The political change will reflect and complete

this economic change. That is the invariable law of history.

There were other and simpler reasons that influenced Britain. The effect of civil disobedience and passive resistance is slow, but none the less sure. It does not, on any scale yet witnessed, compel an empire instantly to yield, though it hastens the offer of concessions. Rather is it an appeal to the better nature and the professed liberalism of the imperial people. The imperial power will coerce, because it believes that its duty is to maintain order, but it performs this operation with a growing sense of shame. To repeat it indefinitely becomes in the long run intolerable.

The Labour Government realised, when it took office, that its choice lay between coercion on an unprecedented scale and an adequate offer of independence. It is no accident that the man, who has formed the first National Government in Indian history, had spent twenty years of his life in British prisons.

What the more idealistic of Englishmen would say in these terms can be backed by realistic arguments. British military resources are limited; could they afford the man-power required to hold down all the millions of India indefinitely? It is one thing to use a professional army for such a purpose, and quite another to rely on conscripts.

But far-sighted soldiers used an even more telling argument than this. We are still living in a dangerous world and the fear of yet another world war haunts us. Could Britain face it

with India still a rebel ? The hope of finding in a free India a friend and perhaps an ally played its part in reconciling even conservative Englishmen to the offer of independence. And so " the proudest day " has dawned.

It is an able team that Jawaharlal Nehru has got together. The names of the Congress veterans who from its core call to mind contrasted temperaments, complementary talents and an impressive weight of experience. Another name also meant much to every close observer; that of Dr. John Matthai, by reason of his training as an economist.

But rarely has a new government faced a problem so baffling. In its relations with Downing Street it will encounter few difficulties. There it may expect sympathy backed by adequate knowledge. The cabinet, in which the members of the Mission sit, need no longer rely, as previous cabinets have done, on the advice of officials.

The problem of India's relations with Britain is settled in principle. Everything now turns on the ability of this Congress Government to end the feud which the Moslem League seems bent on perpetuating. If any had underestimated it, the events in Calcutta have revealed it, in all its horror. Civil War is a word which responsible commentators are slow to use, but we have now to face even this possibility. We in London know too little of the detailed facts to risk a confident judgment, but no one doubts that the slaughter was organised and that some share of the responsibility falls on the

Bengal Government.

Neither in this matter, nor in the controversy over the formation of the Interim Government, is there any inclination to shield the Moslem League. It has put itself wholly in the wrong.

Faced with a conspiracy that organises murder, arson and loot, the first duty of the central and provincial governments is simple. It is to protect life and to check, by the use of all their powers, the drift towards anarchy and civil strife. That done, the desperate political problem of the League's opposition has to be faced.

The Interim Government has come into being for one single over-mastering purpose—to lay the foundations of independence.

It might be possible to crush all opposition under the mere weight of arms and numbers. I need not dwell on the notorious difficulties—the solidarity of Moslems when their fanaticism is roused and the part they play in the army and police. The graver reason for seeking a peaceful solution is that India could hope for no happy era of freedom, if a fourth of her population were to enter it with a sullen sense of defeat. The Indian Union can thrive, only if it is formed by the consent of both communities.

The solution of Pakistan is ruled out, as Mr. Jinnah conceived it, if only for the decisive strategical reasons on which the Mission chiefly relied. What follows ? If we are bent on avoiding civil strife and cannot concede the demand for a separate sovereign Moslem state, there is no way out but by compromise.

Chapter Twelve

WORLD NEEDS NEHRU'S VOICE

Soon after the breakdown of the Interim Government plan, clouds overshadowed the horizons of democracy. On June 15, 1946, a demand that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should represent India at the next session of the United Nations Organisation was made in an editorial of the *New Leader*, the weekly organ of the Independent Labour Party.

"The world needs Nehru's voice," said the editor.

Commenting on the situation in India and the question of parity between the Moslem League and the Congress, the editorial said: "We should regret absence of the Congress party from the Interim Government, not only from the point of view of India but from that of the world. Instead of giving the Congress and the League five seats each, the fair and sensible thing would be to give the Congress six and the Moslem League four. If the League rejected that, it would place itself in an untenable position."

I. JINNAH AND NEHRU

The backgrounds of Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru are not too dissimilar except for religion. In political techniques the two men show the same

divergences that mark them otherwise. Pandit Nehru employs abstractions from his retentive memory. He modifies and changes in his search for compromise.

Mr. Jinnah is a controversialist supreme, harsh and unyielding. He uses cynical and the rather familiar technique - repetition of slogans, inflammation of religious emotions and uncompromising demands. If he avoids complete cynicism, it is only because the Qaid-e-Azam, as he is known to his followers, pursued his objective with a mind that looks neither to the right nor to the left.

Mr. Jinnah has won his remarkably commanding position because of all the Indian politicians he is the cleverest tactician.

Pandit Nehru, though Hindu by birth, is an agnostic by preference. To some extent, therefore, he avoids bitterly personal emotions which dominate most of India's politicians.

Mr. H. N. Brailsford has made an excellent study of both the leaders. Here is an interesting extract from his article :

Two personalities typify India, while the electoral contest drags on, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. M. A. Jinnah. Both are in constant request as speakers ; both are thronged, when they travel, by immense crowds at every railway station. No two men could present a sharper contrast.

A handsome elderly man, immaculately dressed in European clothes, Mr. Jinnah has nothing Indian about him, except his dark complexion, and he speaks more fluently in English than in

his native Urdu. His outstanding virtue is that he is incorruptible but his personality is rigid. One does not converse with him : one listens and interrupts. Power came to him late in life, and he wields it like a man who has endured long years of frustration. His tactics, in talk as in action, are to impose his will with scanty concern for those around him and beneath him. He moves and thinks on a single track, inflexible and uncompromising, and he is formidable only so long as he can check his opponents by a series of unqualified and unbending negations. He has no arts of persuasion, for, while he has rallied the great mass of Indian Moslems behind him, he cannot make Pakistan a positive policy acceptable to others, or even plausible. It remains in his hands, what it always was, a negation, a denial of Indian unity. It is an emotion rather than a policy, an expression of the fears and frustrations which Moslems feel, when they face the numbers and the economic power of the Hindus.

We, of the West, are apt to think of Pandit Nehru as a citizen of the world, which he, certainly, is. He is for us, first of all, our socialist comrade, and we recall with sympathy and admiration his wide culture, his training in the sciences, his love of English poetry and his familiarity with history, which is for him the vivid background and framework of the struggle to which he has given his life. But with all his Western culture, he has remained an Indian who feels instinctively one with the masses of peasants and workers around him. Open-minded

and sympathetic, he is always accessible and converses easily. There is no rigidity here and no sense of frustration. Not even his long years of imprisonment have embittered him, and what impressed me most during a memorable stay with him was the serenity with which he faces the tangled crisis of today and the perplexities of tomorrow.

II. PROOF OF BRITISH FAILURE

Dr. Harold Laski, foremost socialist thinker and economist, gave the following message to the *United Press of India* on the occasion of the fifty-fifth birthday of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, celebrated on Novembr 14, 1944: "I should like through you to send my warm good wishes to Pandit Jawaharlal on his fifty-fifth birthday. I know no figure in contemporary politics of greater mobility than he and no greater proof of failure of British system in India than that he should be in gaol instead of being the Prime Minister of a free India. I hope earnestly that I shall see this aim fulfilled in a brief time."

III. MAN GREATLY BELOVED

Prof. Edward Thompson in his message said: "It is very hard to know what to say about my dear friend Pandit Jawaharlal. As my message I send you, Pandit Jawaharlal, the assurance given to the Hebrew Prophet 'Man greatly beloved fear not: Peace be unto: Be strong: yes, be strong. Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shall rest in thy lot

at end of days'."

IV. VALIANT FIGHTER

Lord Strabolgi also sent his best wishes for Nehru whom he characterised as "a valiant fighter for India's freedom."

"I believe," said Lord Strabolgi, "time is overdue for unconditional release of Nehru and other Congress leaders."

V. THE UNCOMPROMISING DEMOCRAT

Mrs. Ethel Mannin, famous authoress and champion of India's freedom, said: "I am delighted to send my message for Nehru whom I greatly honour. It is a custom in this country to send people in their birthday greetings 'many happy returns.' I would like to send Jawaharlal this year a slightly amended version of the 'many happier returns,' as many of them he feels to make for a rich and useful living. That I have utmost admiration for his uncompromising stand you must know, and that I am completely with him in things for which he stands which is not merely a free independent India but for issues which go beyond nationalism—a dream of and struggle for a free socialist world in which the brotherhood of men, independent of race or colour or creed is a reality. Greetings from my heart to you, Jawaharlal personally and things for which you stand."

VI. MAN OF CONSTRUCTIVE VISION

Mr. Fenner Brockway, Secretary of the

Independent Labour Party, London, in course of a lengthy message to the *United Press of India*, said:

"I take the view that greatest changes in history have taken place not only due to individual leaders but to deeper social forces. Nevertheless leadership is important and sometimes decisive. India is fortunate in having today two of the world's greatest men as its leaders. I mean of course Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru. I welcome the opportunity of sending Pandit Nehru a message on his fifty-fifth birthday. That he should be in prison is a sufficient indictment of the British rule. This wrong is more intolerable by the fact that in stature of his ability and personality he is a giant compared with the little statesmen who keep him in gaol. Mr Amery is a pigmy not only physically but mentally and spiritually compared with him. There is no man in the British Cabinet who has knowledge of the mankind through ages and in the present period such as Pandit Jawaharlal possesses. There is no man who has so deeply studied all social and political systems in Russia, Britain, America, Germany, as Pandit Jawaharlal has done. There is no man who has his bold constructive vision. There is no man who has his strength of character and resolution to face all sacrifices for his ideals. India has reason to be proud of Pandit Jawaharlal. Britain has reason to be ashamed of the statesmen who have gaoled him."

VII. NEHRU AND CHURCHILL

Mr. Louis Fischer has made an interesting study of Jawaharlal and Winston Churchill in which he says :

" Nehru demonstrates his superiority over Churchill. The former Prime Minister also feels that a constantly expanding Russia is menace to peace and freedom-loving countries. But what does he propose? An Anglo-American military alliance is tantamount to an American guarantee of the British colonial empire. This nineteenth-century solution is out of date, ineffective and disastrous. Churchill is always a super-nationalist and imperialist. Nehru is an internationalist. Churchill helped to make the atomic bomb. But he misses its significance. Nehru uses the language of the atomic age. Churchill urges a dual *entente* Nehru advocates a 'world order'.

" Since Russia threatens, Churchill and, with him, some short-sighted Americans, reason – hold on more tightly to the British Empire. Since Russia threatens, Nehru replies, give freedom to India, Indonesia, Indo-China, Egypt, Syria, the Lebanon, etc.

"A free India would resist Russian encroachment as dangerous to its freedom. An enslaved, unhappy and disaffected India, Egypt and Java might court Russia."

VIII. WORLD'S GREATEST MAN

Mr. Fenner Brockway has paid the following tribute to Nehru as the first Prime Minister of India :

So Jawaharlal is Prime Minister of India. The significance of this tremendous change is difficult to grasp. Since a young man he has always been on the edge of a prison door—either to enter or to depart. Only four years ago he was regarded as such a dangerous political character by the British that he was arrested, held in secret and without any prospect of release. Now the British Viceroy has invited him to form a government. One's first thought is to congratulate Jawaharlal personally. When during his imprisonment after 1942 I sometimes said that I hoped to live to see him President of the United Socialist States of India, both my English and Indian friends would smile, regarding me as an incurable optimist. He has taken the first step towards that position, and I believe he will still reach it. I think we are always apt to exaggerate the importance of individuals compared with the movements which they reflect, but nevertheless I regard Jawaharlal as one of the greatest men, if not the greatest in the world today. India is fortunate to have him.

He has shown wisdom in his offer to the Moslem League and other non-Congress sections to join the Interim Government. I do not like Coalition Governments, but in the present stage of political development in India, and certainly until the Constituent Assembly reports, a broad-based Government is desirable. The initiative is now with the Congress and if Jawaharlal maintains an attitude of generosity and tolerance, as I am sure he will, it will

not be possible for Mr. Jinnah to build up any formidable Moslem opposition. The Cabinet Ministers' proposal to group the provinces with large Moslem populations was the maximum which Mr. Jinnah could hope for. There is some chance that he may get this if he joins the Government. If he refuses, Congress will be encouraged to refuse concessions which it does not like when the Constituent Assembly meets.

It was good to hear Jawaharlal's announcement of the intention to call a conference in New Delhi of the representatives of all the Asiatic Nations. This opens up great possibilities. India can become the leader of the whole continent, not only helping the other peoples of Asia to win their political freedom but planning with them their social and economic development and their anticipation from servitude. In reporting this development, the British broadcasts added in a rather sinister tone that the "Asiatic Nations" would probably include Japan. I hope they will. If India can encourage a democratic Japan to collaborate for the good of the whole of Asia, a great contribution will have been made towards the future peace of the world. In Europe we appear to be going down to more intense divisions and conflicts, burying the hope of any early political or economic unity and advance. In Asia, India has now the opportunity not only to realise its own freedom and unity, but to be the instrument for the achievement of freedom and unity for a whole continent. It

is a great destiny.

IX. MAN OF FEARLESS COURAGE

Here is another tribute to Nehru from Mr. Norman Cliff, New Delhi correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, London:

As a statesman, Pandit Nehru stands head and shoulders above his colleagues. With a Harrow and Cambridge background, he appreciates the Western approach and knows the value of give and take. Therefore, with him understanding is possible. Although blunt and uncompromising in speech, he responds readily to straight dealing.

The miracle of the man is that despite what he has endured at British hands, not a sign of bitterness remains on his features or in his attitude. He has been the guest of British prison authorities in India on nine occasions.

Above everything, Pandit Nehru is a man of fearless courage as I can testify after being at his side when he was faced with hostile tribesmen on the Frontier and infuriated Bihar Hindus whom he ordered to cease brutal retaliation against Moslem neighbours.

Next to India's independence, scientific research and wise, visioned planning are his dearest enthusiasms, but the sad lot of the exploited common man moves him most of all. Not for nothing, is he the darling of the Indian masses.

Chapter Thirteen

THE VOICE OF NEHRU

The statesmen of the world heard the powerful voice of Jawaharlal immediately after he had saddled the Interim Government at New Delhi. On September 26, 1946, he conjured up a vivid picture of India's foreign policy. He declared in unmistakable words that India will support the freedom movement of dependent countries all over the world.

"In the sphere of foreign affairs, India will follow an independent policy, keeping away from the power politics of the groups aligned one against another," said Pandit Nehru. He added, "India will uphold the principle of freedom for the dependent peoples and will oppose racial discrimination wherever it may occur. She will work with other peace-loving nations for international co-operation and goodwill without exploitation of one nation by another."

Pandit Nehru continued: "It is necessary that, with the attainment of her full international status, India should establish contact with all the great nations of the world and that her relations with the neighbouring countries in Asia should become still closer. Towards this end, it is proposed to despatch a goodwill mission to the Middle East and to establish contacts, which will in the first instance be informal,

with countries of both Western and Eastern Europe. It is also proposed to station an Indian Consul at Bangkok and a Vice-Consul at Saigon in the near future.

"With the U.S.A. and China, India already has formed a diplomatic contact. The relations thus already existing will, it is hoped, shortly be strengthened by the exchange of representations on an independent diplomatic footing.

"The first step necessary for India's separate representation abroad is the creation of an Indian Foreign Service to man the diplomatic, consular and commercial posts in foreign countries as well as countries in the British Empire.

"Plans have already been drawn up for the creation of this service and for the recruitment and training of its members, and it is hoped that these will shortly be placed before the cabinet for approval. The implementation of these plans must, however, take a little time because of the number and complexity of the practical issues involved.

"It is a relatively simple matter to recruit young men to a service, train them and appoint them to junior posts from which they may gradually work their way up. But it is estimated that we shall require over three hundred persons to man the posts from the topmost grade down to the lowest, while the number of Indian officials possessing the requisite experience is barely a sixth of that number. Recruitment will, therefore, have to be spread over persons in several different age groups, and the experience and account qualifications of each candidate

will have to be taken into account not only in judging his suitability for the service, but, after selection, in deciding what further training, if any, he should undergo.

"The period of India's separate representation abroad must begin with the best material available and care will be taken to ensure that persons in all walks of life who possess the requisite qualifications are able to offer themselves for selection. The training of the older recruits will necessarily be brief, because they will be required to take up appointments as soon as possible. But it is intended that new recruits should receive instruction in such subjects as economics, world history, international affairs and foreign languages, and to spend a part of their training period at a foreign university. Other matters of detail, such as salaries and allowances, the syllabus of the entrance examination, etc., are still under consideration.

"At present there are Indian diplomatic officials in the U.S.A. and China, High Commissioners in Australia and South Africa (the latter being at present in India), representatives in Burma, Ceylon and Malaya and Trade Commissioners in several countries. With the creation of the new service the existing posts will be strengthened and new ones opened. It will be necessary to work out a system of priorities, but obviously first consideration must be given to countries with which we already have contacts and to our neighbours in the East as well as in the West."

I. TRIBAL AREAS

Dealing with the North-West Frontier policy, Pandit Nehru said:

"The Government propose as soon as practicable to examine in consultation with all the interests concerned, the problem of the tribal areas of the North-West Frontier. The question is one of all-India importance, for the tribes are the guardians of the northern doorway to India and the security and well-being of these areas is, therefore, a definite factor in the defence of this country.

"I should like to make it quite clear that in reviewing the problem there is no intention whatever of depriving the tribes of their existing freedom which they have defended so jealously and valiantly for many years, still less to impose any scheme on them against their will. It follows that the Government's approach to the problem will be essentially a friendly one, seeking, in co-operation and consultaion with the tribes, ways and means of solving their economic difficulties, promoting their welfare genarally and bringing them into a happy and mutually beneficial association with their neighbours in the settled districts.

"I have said that the question is one of all-India importance. So it is but there is a wider aspect to it than this. The tribal areas of the North-West Frontier lie along an international frontier—the frontier which divides India from its friendly neighbour, Afghanistan. From this situation arises an international obligation, for our friends, the Afghans, look to us to

preserve peace and order in the tribal areas in the interests of the tranquillity of their own country. They may rest assured that in seeking a new approach to the problem the fullest regard will be paid to our obligations."

II. REFORMS FOR BALUCHISTAN

Pandit Nehru then referred to the application of reforms to Baluchistan. He said :

"It will fall to the Constituent Assembly, in consultation with the interests concerned, to decide in what way Baluchistan will enter the new Indian body politic and how the Baluchistan of the future will be administered. But in view of the comparative backwardness of the political development in Baluchistan, the Government are already considering the question of forming as soon as practicable an Advisory Council drawn from the representative institutions and organisation in Baluchistan to assist the Agent to the Governor-General. This would be a preliminary to the introduction of a fuller democratic system of administration.

"It is the intention of the Government to consult at every stage the wishes of the inhabitants of Baluchistan and not to ignore such indigenous institutions as the tribal *jirgas*. It may be necessary in view of the local conditions and the wishes of people there to modify the pattern of democratic institutions which may come into being in the rest of India."

III. U.N.O.

Pandit Nehru said :

"Towards the United Nations Organisation India's attitude is that of whole-hearted co-operation and unreserved adherence, in both spirit and letter, to the charter governing it.

"To that end, India will participate fully in its various activities and endeavour to play that role in its councils to which her geographical position, population and contribution towards peaceful progress entitled her. In particular, the Indian delegation will make it clear that India stands for the independence of all colonial and dependent peoples and their full right to self-determination.

"India's delegation to the forthcoming General Assembly of the United Nations is not yet complete, but invitations to join it have aleady been accepted by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Nawab Ali Yar Jung, Mr. Justice Chagla, and Mr. Frank Anthony and with Mr. K. P. S. Menon and Mr. Deshmukh, attached to the delegation will be a strong and representative body of advisers."

IV. CASE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

"The most important item on the agenda from India's point of view is the case against South Africa. It is understood that South Africa will contend that the matter is not within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly as it is essentially one of domestic jurisdiction. With this contention the Government of India do not agree. In their view the treatment of Indians in South Africa is fundamentally a moral and human issue which, in view of the

'purposes' and 'principles' so clearly stated in the charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly cannot disregard."

V. INTERNATIONAL TRUSTEESHIP

"A further important matter will be that of the new international trusteeship system. The Indian delegation will stress the point that sovereignty everywhere vests in the people of a country. If for any reason immediate independence is not feasible, then India would not object to the territory being placed under United Nations trusteeship for a limited period. The attitude of the delegation will be that all Asians and the people of dependent countries stand together for freedom and for emancipation from foreign control, as this is the only way of bringing about world peace and progress."

VI. SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

"Another item of importance concerns the Union of South Africa's wish to absorb the mandated territory of South-West Africa. This proposition Indian delegation will oppose on a point of principle. The Government of India consider that annexation of mandated torritory would be fundamentally opposed to the conception of mandates and trusteeship and that sovereignty resides ultimately in the people of a territory, whose wishes and interests are paramount. The correct course, in their view, would be for S.-W. Africa to be placed first under trusteeship for the Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly of the United Na-

tions then to consider its future.

"Two items on the agenda have to do with the privilege of veto enjoyed by the five great powers in the Security Council—or, as those countries prefer to term it, 'the rule of great powers' unanimity'. The attitude of the delegation towards this controversial issue will be that, although on principle India cannot like such an essentially undemocratic provision in the charter, she attaches the greatest importance to the continuance of great powers' unanimity and co-operation within the framework of the United Nations and would do nothing to prejudice that position.

"So far as her near neighbours are concerned, India will watch with close interest the development of events in Palestine, Iran, Indonesia, China, Siam and Indo-China, as well as in the foreign possessions in India itself, with every sympathy with the aspirations of the peoples of these lands for the attainment of internal peace, freedom (where they lack it) and of their due place in the comity of nations.

"The Immigration Bills introduced in the legislatures of three of the East African colonies had caused a great deal of apprehension, both in India and among the Indians in those colonies. The delegation headed by Raja Maharaj Singh contacted the people there—Indians, Africans, Europeans and others—and the Government of India was awaiting its report."

"Unfortunately there has been for some time past a kind of impasse with regard to our relations with Ceylon," said Pandit Nehru.

" Many things have happened there in recent months or years for the matters of that, which have agitated the Indian opinion a great deal."

VII. PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

Speaking on the Paris Peace Conference, he said :

" Progress in the conference now in session in Paris to decide the terms of peace with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hangary and Finland has been regrettably, but perhaps, understandably slow. India's delegation has, wherever possible, followed an independent line of fair compromise, and has supported those proposals which seemed to offer the solution most generally equitable. The delegation has throughout borne clearly in mind the humanitarian aspect of each problem confronting the conference.

" For two reasons, India has refrained from presenting a formal claim for reparations from Italy : first, because she has no wish to reduce the amount of reparations available for distribution to countries whose claims may be entitled to priority of consideration, and second, because she preferred not to add to that heavy burden which Italy must carry up the steep hill towards economic recovery. The delegation has, however, reserved the right to utilise Italian assets in India towards liquidating Indian nationals' claims to compensation for damage arising out of the war, and for meeting in part certain other claims.

India's concern in the future of the ex-Italian colonies in Africa has been made fully

apparent.

"But we have tried our utmost and we propose to continue trying, to approach the people of Ceylon and the Ceylon Government in a friendly manner, because it is inevitable that Ceylon and India must pull together in future and we do not want a trace of bad blood between us."

Pandit Nehru said that he would make every effort to go to Ceylon, but he could not yet say definitely when he would be able to go.

VIII. BURMA

Pandit Nehru welcomed the proposed formation of a new Government under Major-General Aung San. "We welcome it from many points of view. First of all, in the hope that this will lead rapidly to the freedom and independence of Burma, and secondly we not only hope but expect that the relations between our Government and New Burmese Government will be friendly and cordial."

Pandit Nehru expressed gratitude to the new Governor of Burma for the withdrawal of certain trials that were proceeding against Indians there.

IX. MALAYA

"Conditions there were none too good. The mission sent by the Government and the Congress Mission had returned after doing very good work. The Government of India had so far spent ten lakhs of rupees to give relief to Indians."

X. INDIA'S AMBASSADORS ABROAD

Replying to questions on India's foreign relations, Pandit Nehru said, "Obviously, in the future, we have to do two things—first, to have a much larger number of diplomatic representatives, and secondly, to deal with them directly. Naturally, often enough we shall inform the H.M.G. of what we have done, but the point is that direction and advice will go from here and not from the Foreign Office in London. We hope, fairly soon, to have regular diplomatic representatives in some countries, probably beginning with the U.S.A. and China.

"We have at present Agents-General in Nanking and Washington and so we have contacts which we can develop. We can give them a higher status and have direct relations with these Governments. We should like the same type of relations with Russia, but for the moment we have none and we have to explore and investigate and then establish them, after consultation with the Soviet Government. We certainly want to develop those relations from every point of view, because, apart from Russia's intrinsic importance in world affairs today, the Soviet Union is our neighbour and it is always desirable to have neighbourly relations with neighbours."

Asked what the status of our representatives would be in Nanking and Washington, Pandit Nehru said that the designation had not been finally settled, but it might very well be "Ambassador".

XI. GOODWILL MISSION TO MIDDLE EAST

'The Government of India would informally contact the various countries of Europe, including of course France, and find out exactly what kind of representatives they would like to exchange with us. This would be followed by a formal approach. This applied also to Russia and the various countries of Asia.

" Government intended to send a Goodwill Mission to the Middle-Eastern countries– Egypt, Iran, Iraq, etc.—not with a view to conveying any special political message, but a message of goodwill and friendliness and our desire to have closer diplomatic and cultural relations.

" We hope we shall be able to get Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to lead it," he said.

" The personnel of the mission to Europe had not yet been chosen, but it was hoped that one of the persons who would help us in this matter would be Mr. Krishna Menon (President of the India League, London). He did not know whether Mr. Menon would go to Russia. That would depend upon arrangements to be made later.

XII. WOMEN AS INDIA'S ENVOYS

Asked whether the Government of India intended sending other Indian women to international conferences as they were sending Mrs. Pandit to the U.N.O. General Assembly, Pandit Nehru said, " We will be very glad to send them not only to these international conferences but to appoint them permanently as Ministers and Ambassadors."

Referring to the High Commissioner's office in London, Pandit Nehru said that so far it hardly dealt with political matters. It was mainly concerned with pay, pensions and some other odd jobs. But obviously in the changed circumstances, this office, by whatever name it was called, was likley to be much more important than it had been in the past.

XIII. INDIA MAY OPPOSE BRITAIN

Asked whether he foresaw any contingency in which India's policy would be directly opposed to that of Great Britain in international conferences, Pandit Nehru said : " Even in the past to some extent India has voted against a British proposal. That has happened, and it is quite conceivable that many such occasions may arise. Naturally, India in any international conference or elsewhere goes there not to quarrel with people, but to get things done as far as possible in her own way. It is not always possible to get one's way in these international conferences, and as you see, there are all manner of groupings and pulls in different directions and an issue which seems quite simple is not simple because the background is very difficult, but occasion may arise when India may be opposed to the foreign policy of any country, including England.

XIV. INDIAN DELEGATION AT PARIS

Pandit Nehru explained that if the new Government had wanted to change the personnel of the delegation to the Paris Conference,

it could certainly have done so, but things being what they were at the conference, it did not think it worth while in the first stages to make any changes.

" But whoever the delegates or the representatives are, and whatever their previous background may be, obviously they have to carry out the instructions sent from here. Maybe, in some matters they have no instructions, because amendments come up suddenly and in large numbers, and it is not easy to keep pace with them. Then they have to exercise their discretion within the larger instructions sent to them."

Pandit Nehru said that the term of office of those who represented India in various countries had expired or was on the point of expiring and the question of fresh appointments was before the Government.

Pandit Nehru replied in the affirmative to a question whether the status of deplomatic representatives would be reciprocal. If we sent an Ambassador to Washington or Nanking, they would also send an Ambassador to New Delhi. The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs had informally indicated to the Government of India that the Australian Government would be happy to raise the status of the Australian High Commissioner here to that of Minister. Naturally that meant that our representative in Australia would also become a Minister.

Asked whether we would function at the international conferences as one bloc with the Commonwealth countries, Pandit Nehru said :

"We are not going to function just as a bloc in the sense that we must follow whichever way the bloc goes. We shall confer with them. We shall try to get them round to our view-point. When we do not succeed, we shall differ and go our way."

In the past, said Pandit Nehru, the Indian delegates functioned very much like a kind of camp-followers of the British delegation. About fifteen or twenty years ago they were practically appointed by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Government of India or *vice versa*. That practice had been gradually fading off, although it did exist.

XV. COMMON INTERESTS OF ASIA

He believed that it was growing more common at these conferences for the Indian delegates to confer occasionally with representatives from the Asian countries, because they felt that Asia had certain interests which they should protect all together. Normally speaking, Asia's representation on international conferences, bodies and commissions was very poor, compared to Europe's. Whenever such a matter arose, which was an Asian question, they all held together, may be with other countries like Egypt.

XVI. ALL-OUT SYMPATHY FOR INDONESIA

Pandit Nehru said it was a very well-known fact that we were hundred per cent in sympathy with the Indonesian Republic. "We want them to win through and establish their freedom in Indonesia and we should like to help and support

them in every way in their task. We have not recognised the Indonesian Republic in the formal sense that nations recognise other nations, but in practice we recognise it."

It was conceivable, said Pandit Nehru, that our views in regard to this matter, or in regard to Iran, were not exactly the same as the British Government's. " Our interests may not be the same. We have no interest in policing other countries, or interfering in other countries' affairs. The British Empire being a very spread-out organism obviously has all manner of interests with which we may not be concerned. In fact we might be apprehensive of being dragged into other peoples' quarrels. We do not want that to happen. All these matters were in a transition stage. What we are aiming at is quite clear : what we can or we may do tomorrow is not quite so clear."

XVII. NO POLICING OF OTHER COUNTRIES

A correspondent asked : " To what extent would your department be in a position to work towards the withdrawal of British troops from countries to which the British had sent them ?"

Pandit Nehru said : " We are entirely opposed to policing other countries, and more especially opposed to the use of any Indian resources, men or money, in opposition to the national movement in any other country. We should like to have all our Indian troops back to India, wherever they may be. We have been assured that this process is going on. It seems to us that

it has taken longer than it need have done, but the principle is admitted that they must come back. For instance, from Indonesia many have come back. A fair number still remain there but we are told that all of them will be back by the end of November.

"Apart from the question of shipping, whenever the question of troops comes in one has to deal with complicated and rather static organisms like war offices."

In passing Pandit Nehru mentioned that the military authorities in Java did not give proper facilities for the transport of Indonesian rice allocated to India. "We have taken up a very strong line in regard to that matter," he said.

"The kernel of our policy," said Pandit Nehru, "is the ending of colonialism all over Asia, or for that matter in Africa or elsewhere, and racial equality or, I should say, equality of opportunity for all races, no legal bar, etc., and the ending of domination or exploitaton of one nation by another."

iReplying to another question, Pandit Nehru said that ultimately our representative in London, whether he was called Ambassador or by whatever designation, would deal with India's relations with England directly. India Office was bound to be liquidated anyhow. Exactly when it would be liquidated, he could not say.

India would follow a very friendly policy towards Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, said Pandit Nehru. In reply to a further question about Nepal he said: "Nepal is an independent country as far as we are concerned. If in future Nepal choses

to have some kind of closer union with India we shall welcome it."

Questioned whether the appointment of a minister or ambassador to China or the U.S.A. would take place in the near future, Pandit Nehru said: "I should say it might well take place within the next two or three months or sooner."

XVIII. BOMBING OF FRONTIER

Referring to the North-Western Frontier tribal question, Pandit Nehru said he believed that the North-West Frontier Province Ministry did not know anything about the recent bombing operations till about the end of August. When he took charge on September 2, in effect largely the operations had more or less concluded. For the first three or four days till September 6 or so he did not know anything about them. "When I heard of this bombing, I was terribly worried because it was an urgent and vital matter but as that ended we got some leisure to think about it and we are thinking about it and I hope, may be early next month, to pay a short visit to these tribal areas myself to meet the people chiefly concerned, *i.e.*, the Governor, the tribal people, the Frontier Province Government and then come back here and in consultation with others to lay down some general lines of policy which could be discussed by the cabinet."

Pandit Nehru added, "We shall seek the good offices of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and, in fact, I hope to have him with me."

XIX. POSITIVE APPROACH

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the positive policy that we had got to pursue in the tribal areas would also depend on certain external factors like Afghanistan, because naturally anything done in the frontier affected Afghanistan. The matter was very complicated. On the one hand the people of the Frontier for various reasons, economic or other, sometimes indulged in raids, kidnapping and killing people and this kind of thing could not be tolerated. On the other hand our approach to the question ought to be as friendly as possible but also as firm as possible. The fundamental thing was that we could not possibly go on just in the way we had been going on. Behind all this probably was the economic background. If mineral resources were available in the tribal areas—he did not yet know whether they existed—we might develop them. We might develop hospitals, schools and the rest. He thought that the spending of a large amount of money, as done in the past as some kind of bribe or hush money, was not a good way of producing a right psychology in a people. That money he would still like to go to these frontier areas as without it there might be a crisis but he would like it to go in constructive efforts which would raise their standards, give them new employment, etc.

XX. BALUCHISTAN

Referring to the Advisory Council suggested for Baluchistan, preliminary to the introduction

of a fuller democratic system of administration, Pandit Nehru said that he did not know Baluchistan sufficiently, but the three organisations he had heard and, therefore, suggested were the Anjuman-e-Watan, the Moslem Leage and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema. This course was suggested in view of the fact that it would have taken six or eight months to prepare electoral rolls, etc. "Constitutionally, it will be an advisory body, but in practice, we hope it will be much more. We cannot suddenly change the constitution," he said.

XXI. INDIAN DELEGATION TO U.N.O.

Referring to the proposed Indian Delegation to the U.N.O., Pandit Nehru said that originally Government had invited Syed Raza Ali and Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru. Neither of them was able to accept. Later, Mr. Neogy was invited and he accepted, but in the last few days he had informed that he would be unable to go owing to more or less domestic reasons. "We have to send a maximum of five delegates and a fairly large number of officers, some of whom may be alternate delegates. So, in effect, we have to find possibly one more person as a delegate. We have got two or three persons in view."

As regards foreign possessions in India, Pandit Nehru drew attention to the declaration by the Governor of French India that he would abide by the decision of the inhabitants of French India about their future and said: "There is no difficulty about French India so

far as I can see. There is at present a difficulty in Portuguese India which, I regret to say, is in a deplorable condition at the present moment and for some time past now. Obviously this state of affairs cannot continue long in Goa. It is bad for Goa and bad for people round Goa but for the moment I am not aware of any governmental action about to be taken because, obviously although it is a small bit of India, it raises international issues. If au international issue comes in our way we will have to deal with it but for the moment we have so many big problems to deal with that an issue which might•resolve by itself need not be raised by us as Government."

Chapter Fourteen

FROM LANDIKOTAL TO LONDON

As Premier of the Interim Government, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has made two historic trips : one ærial pilgrimage to Landikotal, the time-honoured village on the ancient borderland of India, and the other ærial voyage to London, the nerve-centre of the mighty British Empire. These two political studies must have enriched the factual treasures in the humane heart of Jawaharlal, the prophet of the New Civilisation.

1

Jawaharlal, overcoming all official hurdles, arrived at Peshawar in the very middle of October, 1946. Immediately he received a warning from the Pathan Patriot to beware of the British machinations during his examination of the tribal areas.

Pandit Nehru acquainted the Frontier Gandhi with the plans of the Interim Government for tribal areas and also the programme of his tour. Badshah Khan, it is understood, gave his reactions and suggested a programme of economic uplift of the tribal people and also asked Pandit Nehru to carry out the programme for spread of education in the tribal belt and for establishment of hospitals, etc.

The Frontier Gandhi told the *United Press* that he had asked Pandit Nehru to beware of

the move of the Political Agents who might collect only their own men in the *jirgas* leaving aside tribesmen with the nationalist outlook. Badshah Khan is reported further to have advised Pandit Nehru to reorientate the tribal policy of the Government of India—a policy which, according to him, had been responsible for all the troubles in the tribal areas.

As everyone knows this prophecy of the Frontier Gandhi proved hundred per cent correct. The stooges of British imperialism tried to put every possible spoke in the wheels of nationalism across the Indus even during the brief visit of Jawaharlal.

I. BEFOOLING THE FOLK

These were agents of the Moslem League who took a leading part in befooling the innocent Pathans in the name of religion. Little wonder that the car of Jawaharlal was stoned even at Peshawar. But the Congress Ministry in the Frontier displayed an unexampled patience in dealing with their misguided brethren.

"If anybody else were in my position he would have been compelled to open fire today," said the Frontier Premier, Dr. Khan Sahib, referring to the League demonstrations.

"But I know the people have been duped. Some unscrupulous people taking advantage of their ignorance brought these demonstrators here. It is not the demonstrators who are to be blamed. They are playing in the hands of some unscrupulous element who are bringing a slur on the fair name of the Pathans," he added.

The British Political Department joined hands with the Moslem League, or rather the Moslem League joined hands with the British Political Department, because we have to blame our countrymen for prolonging the thraldom of our country. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the British agents behaved in the most shamefacedly manner during the flying visit of the Indian Premier.

Pandit Nehru met many *jirga*-men, tutored by the Political Department people, but all "machinations" and manœuvrings of the Political Department failed and their tactics were thoroughly exposed.

The hostiles, while welcoming Pandit Nehru, emphasised that they wanted to see a settlement with the Moslems in India.

"Political differences apart we have damaged our reputation of being a hospitable people in the eyes of the world," said Khan Faqira Khan, Chief of Jaddun tribe and a prominent Moslem Leaguer, commenting on the League demonstration against Pandit Nehru on his arrival here on the 16th of October.

He added, "I admire the patience and tact of Doctor Khan Sahib in dealing with his political opponents on the occasion of the arrival of the respected guest. If he had not shown great spirit of toleration on this occasion our province might have been engulfed in internecine trouble."

Pandit Nehru went about his tour undeterred. He was not daunted by the firing and stoning that was going around him. He did not

value his life in a land where life had no value. He took everything easy. He did not feel anxious about his personal safety. He ran, almost rushed towards the yelling Masuds. He faced them like a hero, because his stand was morally the strongest. The entire civilised world was amazed by his dauntless spirit.

Pandit Nehru silenced Masuds' *jirga* telling them: "Go your way, if you have nothing else to say."

The story regarding Faqir of Ipi's men having fired from a stolen gun at the time Pandit Nehru was scheduled to arrive at Razmak caused a sensation, but those who claimed to know the affairs here asserted that such sniping was not a new thing at all. Whenever any distinguished visitor came from outside this method was employed always.

Incidentally it helped establishing on visitors' minds the necessity of letting political agents do anything to keep down "such turbulent people."

The exciting incident at Landikotal on Khyber road which involved Pandit Nehru, the Khan Brothers, Mr. Mehr Chand Khanna, Mr. Yahya Khan, Ministers, besides world's newsmen—took place happily without causing any injury to any one.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Frontier Congress leader, repeated a previous assertion that the incidents which have marked Pandit Nehru's study trip of the rugged North-West Frontier were "work of the Political Department."

Asked a direct question whether he was

of the same opinion, Pandit Nehru said: " These things can be hinted at (by the Political Department). They don't need to be organised."

II. THE MESSAGE OF INDIA

The message of Nehru was the message of India to the brave people of the Frontier.

" Great revolution is shaking the world and a new era is in the offing," said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing Congress workers at the Premier's residence.

He said that the seeds of revolution were sown in the last world war, and they were spreading forward everywhere. The world was changing fast and India was moving still faster in this changing world. A new strength was evident in India and there was new life. Her hand and feet were tied but today she was fast breaking the chains of slavery. India was bound to get complete independence in a very short time and there was no power on earth that could put back the clock.

Referring to his visit to the Frontier after six years Pandit Nehru said that these years had changed the whole face of the world and also brought revolutionary changes in India where the Congress had passed through many struggles. He came to the Frontier this time in a new capacity as the Member of the External Affairs, though it meant no difference for him. But he came in that capacity in order to study the affairs here and discuss them with his colleagues. That was so because he said most of the

officers in his department had begun their careers in the Frontier and possessed what he described as the " Frontier mentality."

A free country alone can have relations with other free countries, but he had no doubt that other countries realised India's power and knew that tomorrow India is going to become even more powerful country and would have her place of honour among nations of the world. His visit to the Frontier was intended to enable him to understand the intricate problems of the Frontier Province. Did they not know that the first time he came to know about the bombing of Waziristan was from the Badshah Khan's statement. The bombing was stopped, but he wanted to see for himself the affairs here before being in a position to say anything. Proceeding, Pandit Nehru said that bigger issues awaited solution than what seemed to be created for them.

" The communal question was raised by those who wanted to impede their progress or those who were afraid of new changes, for they did not suffer the new rising surge." He advised consideration of bigger issues concerning India with a broader vision. While doing so, they should keep before them events happening all the world over. A devastating war had ended without peace being established, instead, everyone seems to be greatly disturbed.

That is due perhaps to the changing world, it is clear that one age is ending and a new era is dawning.

" Our problems," he said, " are innumerable. Whenever there is a famine or an outbreak of

an epidemic lakhs of our countrymen die." "It looks," he added, "as if we stand on death's door as physical wrecks and are thrown into death's jaws, just by a push given by conditions created by famine or disease."

III. UNSCIENTIFIC APPROACH

On October 19, 1946, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru delivered a thoughtful speech in the meeting of the British and Indian Medical Officers at Wana. He stated that the entire approach to the problems of the Frontier had been unscientific and therefore unsuccessful. Vast sums of money had been spent to no purpose in the tribal areas.

"The basic factor," said Pandit Jawaharlal, "is the economic life of the country. You cannot win the people over by punitive expeditions. You can win them over by treating exactly as if they are your kith and kin."

"Of course," continued Pandit Nehru, "crimes must be prevented and the criminals punished. But according to modern theory of crime, even in case of individual criminals the juries try to penetrate into the criminal act and the entire environment responsible for such crime."

Panditji stressed that such a scientific approach to the problem was needed. There was much of an analogy between an individual criminal and a crime-loving group.

"Just as," said he, "there are individuals with undeveloped mind, so there may be a whole people who are immature. What is required

is that such people should be educated to develop their mind including scope for modern vocations."

2

" One foot up and one foot down,
That's the way to London town."

So runs a nursery rhyme. And it is mightily true of Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, because he has been clamouring for a Round Table Conference in London ever since the frustration of his high hopes for carving out a slice of India. Lord Wavell was also at fault, because he held out rosy expectations to the lips of the League as well as the Congress, and ultimately found himself at a loss to quench their thirst. At last he had to appeal to Attlee to extricate him from the boggy politics wherein he had let himself down to gain ephemeral advantages. Consequently, the leaders of the Congress, the Moslem League, and the Sikhs were invited to London for the final last-minute effort to secure the participation of the League in the Constituent Assembly due on December 9, 1946. The Congress outright rejected the invitation, but later on accepted it on the insistence of the British Government.

IV. NEHRU FACES ATTLEE

Pandit Nehru, in a message sent to the Viceroy on November 26, explained why he did not believe any useful purpose would be served by the proposed London talks.

" We are convinced," he said, " that our leaving India now would mean that at the instance of the League, the Cabinet Mission's

plan is going to be abandoned or substantially varied and that we are parties to it. It would mean giving in to the League's intransigence and incitement to violence and this would have disastrous consequences. The first thing to be certain about is that plans agreed to will be implemented and that there will be a continuity about policy."

The British Government convinced Pandit Nehru that the meeting of the Constituent Assembly will not be postponed.

"There is no intention of abandoning either the decision of the Constituent Assembly to meet or the plan put forward by the Cabinet Delegation," said Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, in a message to Pandit Nehru, dated November 27, which formed part of their correspondence.

"The object of our talks would be to try and ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on December 9," Mr. Attlee added.

"Arrangements will be made to enable you to return by December 9."

It is worthy of note that Lord Wavell, Mr. Jinnah, Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh travelled in the same 'plane. They were together for thirty-six hours. It is ironical to note that Jinnah and Nehru did not exchange a word during this long ærial voyage. I am not sure that this *Reuter* news was not correct. I wish it were wrong and the leaders should have contradicted it powerfully, because it reflects badly on the sociability of our great leaders. Jawaharlal Nehru, however, was right when he

stated that the invitation to London was tantamount to the reopening of the whole question of constitutional settlements.

"It would appear that the proposal involves a reopening and a reconsideration of the various decisions arrived at since the visit of the British Cabinet Delegation to India. The Moslem League accepted places in the Government on the very clear understanding that they also accepted the long-term proposals contained in the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16. Indeed they could not join the Government otherwise. But now the League have announced very definitely that they will not participate in the Constituent Assembly. We attach, as you are aware, great importance to the holding of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed, namely, December 9. The invitation to us to go to London appears to us to reopen the whole problem which was settled to a large extent by the Cabinet Mission's statement and the formation of the Interim Government. Any impression in the public mind that these decisions are reopened would, in our opinion, be fatal."

V. THE BRITISH VERDICT

Mr. Jinnah did try to open the whole question once again, but he was sadly disappointed by the firm 'No' from the British Government, but while the British Government yielded to Pandit Nehru in the matter of constitutional discussion, they yielded to Mr. Jinnah in the matter of constitutional decision. The British Government

decided that the provinces had no choice to vote against the grouping system until first elections after the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, although the Congress was free to refer the matter to the Federal Court which in itself is a British creation and is not likely to give its decision against the verdict of its imperial masters. Thus the history of the Round Table Conference has been repeated, and a Pakistan Award has bagged the Communal Award. In the face of British and League Coalition, let God save the Country !

Chapter Fifteen

THE CONSTITUTION-MAKER

The soul of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the soul of India. Such a man is excellently qualified to voice the feelings of his countrymen and embody them in a national constitution. If a great book, according to Milton, is the bloodless substitute for a man, a great constitution like that of U.S.A. is the bloodless substitute for great men like George Washington. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, like his American predecessor, is destined to go down in history as a unique constitutionalist. And let us not forget that Pandit Nehru has suggested that the Indian Constitution should be moulded closely upon the pattern of the American Constitution—a right type of compliment to the makers of the American Constitution which the American press has highly applauded.

" Here was the soul of India speaking." That is how foreign journalists reacted to the masterly, thought-provoking and inspiring oration by Pandit Nehru while sponsoring the " declaration of objectives" resolution in the Constituent Assembly on the 13th day of December, 1946.

In stirring sentences, Pandit Nehru emphasised the historic importance and the solemnity of the occasion of the Constituent Assembly, adding that the declaration was indeed a pledge and an undertaking.

Pandit Nehru exhorted the framers of the amendments to approach the task of solemn responsibility not in legalistic quibbling but in "a spirit of adventure."

Deploring the absence of the League nominees, Pandit Nehru urged: "Duty calls us to bear the absentees in mind."

Pandit Nehru's tribute to the father of India—the great Mahatma—and all fighters for freedom received universal acclamation. The most important part of his address, however, related to his reactions to the London talks, which were, for the first time, shared with representatives of the Indian people.

In pin-drop silence, Pandit Nehru admitted, without any regret or rancour, that he came back without any message of cheer and overloaded with disappointment.

"It was a blow to me," he continued, "that just when we were beginning to stride ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were announced and a new procedure suggested."

Rising to heights of eloquence and patriotic fervour, Pandit Nehru warned the British statesmen, who, somehow, "lacked imagination and daring, while holding great offices," that "we have gone through the valley of shadow often enough—we are used to it and, if necessity arises, we shall go through it again."

Pandit Nehru, however, added that fresh trouble would harm Great Britain more than it would harm India and may be injurious to the whole world.

Pandit Nehru did not mince words to bring home that India would not tolerate imposition of any sort.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moving the resolution said : " This resolution is not a part of the constitution that we are going to draw up, and it must not be looked upon as such. This House has perfect freedom to draw up a constitution and when others join this House, they will have perfect freedom to fashion out that constitution. This resolution steers in between two extremes (of saying too much and too little) and lays down only certain fundamentals, which, I believe, no group, no party and hardly any individual in India, can dispute. Nobody challenges them in India ; nobody ought to challenge them. If anybody does challenge them we accept that challenge and we hold to our position. "

I. PASSION FOR FREEDOM

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru stated that India's passion for freedom was irresistible.

Speaking with some bitterness about his recent visit to England and its outcome, Pandit Nehru said, " I was reluctant to go for reasons that the House knows well and I went because of a personal request from the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I went and I met with courtesy everywhere and yet at this psychological moment in India's history, when we wanted, when we hungered, for messages of cheer, friendship and co-operation from all over the world, and more specially from England, because of the past

contact and conflict between us, unfortunately, I came back without any message of cheer and with a large measure of disappointment. I hope that the new difficulties that have arisen—for new difficulties have arisen as everyone knows because of recent statements made by the British Cabinet and others in authority there . . . . I hope these will not come in our way and we shall yet succeed in going ahead, with the co-operation of all of us here and those who have not come.

"Nevertheless, it has been a blow to me, it has hurt me, that just when we were going to strike ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were mentioned which had not been mentioned previously, new methods of procedure were suggested.

"Now I do not wish to challenge the *bona fides* of any persons, but I do wish to say this that whatever the legal aspect of a thing might be there are moments when law is a feeble reed to rely upon, more especially when you have to deal with a nation which is full of the passion for freedom. Most of us here during these past many years, for a generation or more, have taken part in the struggle for India's freedom. We have gone through the valley of the shadow and, if necessity arises, we shall go through it again."

II. THE ARCHITECTURE OF INDIA

Here in the Constituent Assembly the leaders of India are laying the foundations of the new political architecture for our motherland

under the personal supervision of Mahatma Gandhi, the great political architect. Thus spoke Nehru:

"Nevertheless through all this long period we have thought of the time when we shall have an opportunity not merely to struggle, not merely to destroy but to construct and create. And now that it appeared that the time is coming for constructive effort in a free India, we looked forward to it with joy and when fresh difficulties are placed in our way at such a moment it hurts and it shows that whatever the forces behind all this may be, people, who are able and clever and very intelligent, somehow lack the imagination which should accompany great offices, for if you have to deal with any people you have to understand them imaginatively, emotionally and of course intellectually. And one of the unfortunate legacies of this past has been that there has been no imagination in the understanding of the Indian problem."

India does not stand in need of any foreign advice. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has tried in vain to get co-operation of all the conflicting elements but his golden hopes have ended in smoke. Further he said:

"So far as our own countrymen are concerned, we must inevitably try our utmost to gain their co-operation in the largest measure. Co-operation, yes, but co-operation cannot, does not and will not mean giving up of the fundamental ideals on which we have stood and on which the nation should stand. Because that is not co-

operation to achieve something, but a surrender of everything that has given meaning to our lives.

"Apart from that, as I said, we seek the co-operation of England, even at this stage, which is full of suspicion of each other. We feel that if that co-operation is denied, maybe, that will be injurious to India, certainly to some extent, but probably more so to England, and to some extent to the world at large.

"We live today in a period, when having just come out of a mighty war, people talk vaguely and wildly of new wars to come. At such a moment, this new India is taking birth, renascent, vital, fearless. Perhaps it was a suitable moment for this new birth to take place out of the turmoil of the world. But we have to be clear-eyed at this moment, we who have the heavy task of constitution-building. We have to think of the tremendous prospect of the present, and the greater prospect of the future and not get lost in seeking small gain for this group or that.

"In this Constituent Assembly we are functioning on a world stage, and the eyes of the world are upon us, the eyes of our entire past are upon us, and though the future is still unborn, the future too looks at us. And so, I would beg of this House to consider the resolution in this mighty prospect of the past, of the turmoil of the present and of this great unborn future that awaits us."

Jawaharlal Nehru advised the constitution-makers to rise above the party and to think of

the nation. We should try to think of the world as a whole as one united family. We should think of the great problems that face us in the widest, most tolerant and the most effective manner, just in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi, to whom Jawaharlal referred as follows:

"There is another person who is absent here and who must be in the minds of many of us, as he is in my mind as I stand here today, the greater leader of our people, the father of our nation who has been the architect of this Assembly and all that has gone before it and possibly of much that will follow. He is not here because in pursuit of his ideals he is ceaselessly working in a far corner of India, but I have no doubt that his spirit hovers over us and blesses our undertaking."

III. THE OATH OF TENNIS COURT

Pandit Nehru went on: "Because this is a Constituent Assembly, I think also of the various Constituent Assemblies that have gone before, of what took place at the making of the great American nation, when the fathers of that nation met and fashioned out a constitution which has stood the test of these many years—more than a century and a half—and of the great nation which has been built up on the basis of that constitution. And my mind goes back to the mighty evolution which took place, also over one hundred and fifty years ago, and to the Constituent Assembly that met in the gracious and lovely city of Paris which has fought so many battles for freedom and the difficulties that

that Constituent Assembly had; how the King and other authorities came in its way and still it continued. The House will remember that when these difficulties came and even lodging and a place to meet were denied to that Constituent Assembly they betook themselves to an open tennis court and met there and took the oath which is called the Oath of the Tennis Court.

"They continued to meet in spite of kings and in spite of others and did not disperse till they had finished the great task they had undertaken. I trust that it is in that solemn spirit that we too are met here, whether we meet in this chamber or other chambers or in the fields or the market place, we shall go on meeting and continuing this work till we complete it."

IV. THE INDIAN REPUBLIC

Referring to the expression "independent sovereign republic" in the resolution, Pandit Nehru said: "I will not go into the argument about monarchy and the rest, but obviously we cannot produce a monarchy for India out of nothing. It is not there. If it is to be independent and sovereign state, we are not going to have external monarchies. It must inevitably be a republic."

Some friends had asked him why he had not put in the word "democratic." His reply was: "It is conceivable, of course, that a republic may not be democratic, but all our past is witness to the fact that we stand for democratic institutions. Obviously we are aiming at democracy and nothing less than democracy.

What form of democracy, what shape it might take, is another matter. Democracies of the present day, many of them in Western Europe and elsewhere, have played a great part in the world's progress. Yet it may be doubtful if those democracies may not have to extend their content, change their shape somewhat, before long, if they have to remain completely democratic.

"We are not going just to copy, I hope, a certain democratic procedure or institution of so-called democratic countries. We may improve upon it in any event, whatever system of Government we may establish here must fit in with the temper of our people and be acceptable to them.

"We stand for democracy. It will be for this House to determine what shape we shall give to that democracy—the fullest democracy, I hope. The House will notice that in this resolution, although we have not used the word 'democratic'—because we thought that it was obvious that a republic contains that word and we did not want to use unnecessary and redundant words—we have done something much more than use the word.

"We have given the content of democracy in this resolution, and not only the content of democracy but the content, if I may say so, of economic democracy.

"Others may take objection to this resolution on the ground that we have not said that it should be a socialist republic. I stand for socialism and I hope India will stand for socialism

and that India will go towards the constitution of a socialist state and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way. The form of socialism again is another matter for your consideration, but the main thing is that in such a resolution, if in accordance with my own desire I do put in that we want a socialist state, we put in something which may be agreeable to many and may not be agreeable to some and we wanted this resolution not to be controversial in regard to such matters. Therefore, we have laid down not theoretical words and formulæ but rather the content of the thing we desire.

"We are going to make a constitution for India and it is obvious that what we are going to do in India, will have a powerful effect on the rest of the world. Even today, on the verge of freedom as we are, India has begun to play an important part in world affairs. That part will grow, and therefore it is right that the framers of our constitution should always bear this larger international aspect too in mind, we approach the world in a friendly way. We want to make friends with all countries. We want to make friends in spite of the long history of conflict in the past with England also."

V. THE RESOLUTION PASSED

The resolution of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, declaring India a republic, was passed on January 22, 1947. It was passed unanimously, all members standing.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in a stirring and

impassioned reply to the debate in the Constituent Assembly on his resolution on objectives, said: "There has been plenty of opportunity for those who wanted to come. Unfortunately, they have not yet decided to come and they still hover in this state of indecision. I regret that and all I can say is this: "We shall welcome them at any future time. They may come, but it should be made clear without any possibility of misunderstanding that no work will be held up in future, whether any one comes or not.'

"There has been waiting enough, not only waiting for six weeks, but many in this country have waited years and years and the country has waited for some generations now.

"How long are we to wait? If some of us who are more or less prosperous can afford to wait, what about the waiting of the hungry and the starving?"

Pandit Nehru went on: "We claim in this resolution to frame a constitution for a sovereign independent Indian republic, necessarily democratic. What else can we have in India? Whatever the state may have or may not have, it is impossible and inconceivable and undesirable to think in any other terms but in terms of a republic in India.

"What relation will that republic bear to other countries of the world, to England, to the British Commonwealth and the rest? For a long time past we have taken a pledge on Independence Day that India must sever her connection with Great Britain, because that connection

had become an emblem of British domination. At no time have we thought in terms of isolating ourselves in this world from other countries or of being hostile even to countries which have dominated over us. On the eve of this great occasion, when we stand on the threshold of freedom, we do not wish to carry a trail of hostility with us against any country. We want to be friendly with all. We want to be friendly with the British people and the British Commonwealth of Nations."

Pandit Nehru proceeded: "I commend this resolution to the House—not only to the House but to the world at large—making it perfectly clear that it is a gesture of friendship to all and behind it there lies no hostility. We have suffered enough in the past, we have struggled sufficiently and we may have to struggle again, but under the leadership of a very great personality we have sought always to think in terms of friendship and goodwill to others, even those who have opposed us. How far we have succeeded I do not know, because we are weak human beings. Nevertheless, the impress of that message has been left in the hearts of millions of people in this country and even when we err or go astray, we cannot forget it. Some of us may be little men and some of us big. But whether we are small or big, for the moment we represent great causes. And therefore something of the shadow of greatness falls upon us and we also become great.

"And today in this Assembly we represent a right cause and this resolution that I have

placed before you gives some form to that cause. I hope that this resolution will lead soon to a constitution on the lines suggested in it and I trust that that constitution itself will lead very soon to the real freedom that we have craved for, and that real freedom will be realised in terms of food for our starving people, clothing for them, housing for them and all manner of opportunity for progress.

"I hope it will lead also to the freedom of the other countries of Asia, because in a sense, however unworthy we may be, we have become—let us recognise it—the leaders of the freedom movement in Asia and whatever we do, we should think of ourselves in these larger terms.

"When some petty matter divides us and we have difficulties and conflicts amongst ourselves over small matters, let us remember not only this resolution but this great responsibility that we shoulder, the responsibility of the freedom of four hundred million people of India, the responsibility of the leadership of a large part of Asia, the responsibility of being some kind of a guide to wast numbers of people all over the world."

PART III

VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT
[A Biographical Study]

You must remember that true patriotism is in your blood.

—PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

The interests of our country demand our unity in the face of a common and growing danger. Let us not hold back, because remember—If India dies, who lives ? If India lives, who dies ?

Vijayalakshmi Pandit

Chapter One

GOING HER WAY

Vijayalakshmi Pandit and Madame Chiang Kai-shek were born together in 1900. They marked momentous movements of nationalism in Asia. Lakshmi was born on August 18, 1900.

It was a year of drought and famine in India. The new baby, however, brought showers of rain. Swarup—as Vijayalakshmi was called—was a happy addition to the family. At last Jawaharlal had his playmate. Anand Bhawan was a big house and it required at least two to play. The palatial house was built only a year before the baby was born. So it was just ready to receive her.

I. CHILDHOOD

Jawaharlal and Swarup had another playmate seven years after. She was a girl too. A baby-sister of theirs. And her name was Krishna. All the three children were put in charge of an English governess. They had a happy time in the happy house. It was a large family of cousins and nephews with silken bonds of affection. This was the time when the Nehru family had achieved the zenith of prosperity. The costliest luxuries were available in the family. Motilal had very expensive dogs, horses and carriages. He also bought ponies for children. Jawaharlal and Swarup used to ride every day. Swarup was

exceedingly beautiful and made much of in the family. She was the apple of her parents' eyes.

Miss Hooper, the European governess, brought up the little girl with every consideration. She was an excellent governess, with extremely good qualifications and came from a very good family. Swarup was brought up with the greatest possible fondness as if she were the only child of the Nehrus. When she was found riding on the pony, she was considered spoiled by the friends of Motilal. The people did not appreciate the physical culture of riding.

At a very early age, Swarup accompanied her parents on a voyage to Europe. They also paid a visit to Germany. Jawaharlal was admitted at Harrow, and Swarup returned to India with her mummy and daddy without her brother.

There was a clock-work regularity in the daily routine of Swarup. Early in the morning she went out riding on a beautiful pony. A ring was specially laid out for her in the gardens of the palatial house so that she could ride at home if she did not like to go out.

Swarup was not allowed by her governess to see a movie, but she taught her dancing. But her parents did not approve of her dancing. So this passion had also to be nipped in the bud. Notwithstanding his heavy engagements, Motilal found a few minutes to spend with Swarup.

Swarup was more docile than her sister Krishna. The latter was obstinate. Swarup was more reasonable. Krishna had a wild temper which often got the better of her. Swarup was

perfectly self-controlled.

"To be punished," says Krishna, "locked up alone, or deprived of my supper was a frequent occurrence with me but it rarely happened to my sister (Swarup). She was always obedient and docile, because it was less troublesome to obey than to disobey."

After riding in the morning the children had lessons with the governess. Then they had lunch. After lunch there was seista. Then they had a lesson in piano. In the evening they went out for a drive.

"Jawahar, Swarup and I," says Krishna, "learnt to ride almost as soon as learnt to walk."

II. GIRLHOOD

It was the year of grace nineteen hundred and fifteen, and Swarup was fifteen years old. The Congress and the Moslem League came together at Bombay as the Ganges and the Jumna meet at Allahabad. So Swarup travelled with her father from Allahabad to Bombay to attend the Congress. For Motilal Bombay held great politics. And for Swarup it promised great fun. There indeed she had great fun. But she was not impressed by the political mumbo-jumbo. She could not understand the theatricals.

"Congress in 1915," says Vijayalakshmi, "was a stylish affair. One wore one's prettiest clothes and had a good time meeting people from other parts of India and going to parties."

When Swarup was seventeen Miss Hooper bade good-bye to Anand Bhawan. She had served them for twelve long years. Now she fell

in love with an English friend of hers. And they married. In the absence of her parents, Motilal gave her away in the church.

After the departure of Miss Hooper, Swarup was left to fend for herself. Simultaneously the Nehrus were undergoing a metamorphosis. Motilal Nehru and his son were going deeper and deeper into the slough of politics and the whole family was following in their footsteps. A grim and gloomy reality faced Miss Hooper. Mahatma Gandhi, the wizard of India, had ushered a new era of open defiance to the British authority.

"Naturally," says Vijayalakshmi, "I fell under his magic spell and co-operated joyfully in helping to complete the change in our life which had begun with his entrance into the family."

Miss Hooper's absence was greatly felt. Lakshmi had to look after her younger sister. Mother was too frail to do so. Krishna thus describes her guardianship:

"She was seldom strict with me and more often than not I did just as I liked. That was less trouble for her and it suited me. I was very fond of poetry and so was she. Many a delightful evening was spent in the garden, she reading out aloud and I listening to her with rapt attention. A bond existed between us that was rare and beautiful. Swarup was my guide, philosopher and friend during those days of my childhood."

In character the two girls were psychologically different. Krishna was a troublesome child while Swarup was faithful and obedient. Krishna had the iron will of her father while Swarup

had the sweetness of her mother. In accordance with the spirit of the times Swarup had never gone to school and was educated at home like other girls. But Krishna insisted on going to school. And she went.

In 1919 Mahatma Gandhi visited Allahabad and stayed at the Anand Bhawan. Swarup had the opportunity to study him at close quarters. The tragic happenings at Amritsar which were the topic of the day left an indelible impression upon Swarup. His father and brother both joined the non-co-operation movement started by Gandhiji. Lakshmi was not merely a silent spectator of revolutionary changes at home and in the country. She was developing determination and dauntlessness.

III. YOUTH

Vijayalakshmi was slowly blossoming out into a soldier of non-violence. She was an ardent admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and was prepared to stake her all. Her father presided over the Amritsar session of the Indian National Congress in 1919. It brought great inspiration to her. The entire family of the Nehrus dedicated itself to Gandhiji. And Lakshmi brought her qualities of head and heart to the same temple.

" Will you marry me ?" said a romantic scholar.

" Yes," said Vijayalakshmi.

That is how Ranjit S. Pandit and Vijayalakshmi were married. The wooer seemed to have come out of the fairyland of literature. He was cultured barrister from Kathiawad and

crossed many bridges to meet her. The match was brought about by Mahadev Desai, the Secretary of Mahatma Gandhi.

"It seems only the other day," writes Vijayalakshmi, "that he came to me in Anand Bhawan and asked me to read an article in the *Modern Review* by a dear friend of his—a young man whom he described as very brilliant and most lovable. The year was 1920, the article was entitled *At the Feet of the Guru*, and the name of the author was Ranjit Pandit. For twenty-two years now I have been the wife of this most brilliant and most lovable man. Ranjit and Mahadev were at college together and graduated in the same year. Although they seldom corresponded, there was a deep bond of sympathy and affection between them."

Now both the friends have passed away.

It was through Desai that Swarup had come to know her future husband. A mere literary introduction warmed up into a loving friendship. And they married with the consent of Mahatma Gandhi.

"I have come many miles," said Ranjit, "and crossed many bridges to come to you but in future you and I must cross our bridges hand in hand."

They were married at Allahabad on May 10, 1921. The ceremony was performed as lavishly as that of Madame Chiang. There were hundreds of guests, friends and relations. The entire Working Committee of the Congress was there. A district conference had brought thousands of peasants to the sleepy

town. The English residents feared a violent uprising. The date fixed for the marriage also happened to be the anniversary of the Revolt of 1857. And that added to the worries of the police department.

"I learnt one day," writes Jawaharlal, "through a barrister friend that many Englishmen were thoroughly upset and expected some sudden upheaval in the city. They distrusted their Indian servants and carried about revolvers in their pockets. It was also said privately that the Allahabad Fort was kept in readiness for the English colony to retire there in case of need. I was much surprised and could not possibly make out why any one should contemplate the possibility of a rising in the sleepy and peaceful city of Allahabad just when the very apostle of non-violence was going to visit us. Oh, it was said, May 10th (the date accidentally fixed for my sister's marriage) was the anniversary of the outbreak of the Mutiny at Meerut in 1857 and this was going to be celebrated!"

The marriage was a happy one and it led to a happy contented life between the couple. In the course of time they had three daughters—Chandralekha, Nayantara and Rita Vitasta. Vijayalakshmi says in her reminiscences:

"There have been many ups and downs in our life, some of the bridges we have had to cross were shaky, they threatened to give way, but always we have gone over together, and even after eighteen years I can still be glad for that day in November when we met each other."

Ranjit S. Pandit was a great scholar of Indian and foreign languages. The couple led a very cultured life. Vijayalakshmi's references to her husband are always references to books. Books and Ranjit went hand in hand and they crossed the bridges together. Jawaharlal quotes the following lines of his brother-in-law in his *Autobiography:*

"Shadow is itself unrestrained in its path while sunshine as an incident of its very nature is pursued a hundredfold by nuance. Thus is sorrow from happiness a thing apart; the scope of happiness, however, is hampered by the aches and hurts of endless sorrows."

IV. WOMANHOOD

In March, 1926, Lakshmi and Ranjit Pandit went to Europe. They toured the Continent extensively. They returned to India laden with much useful experience. It was followed by a period of tranquillity. She was digesting the experiences of her life and preparing for the battle ahead. When Lakshmi and Ranjit returned home, Jawaharlal and Kamla were still in Europe. In the summer of 1927 Motilal also planned a trip to Europe. Before his departure he wrote:

"You and *Bhai* (Jawahar) have both been insisting on my taking a holiday in Europe and this end Swarup and Ranjit are doing the same and at last I find it possible to go away in the near future. I am bit tired with the puplic work that I have been doing for the last seven years and it is disturbing to find at the end of

this long period that I have failed to advance the cause of my country in any appreciable way. So I have decided to take a holiday and no more deny myself the leisure of being with all of you."

The advice in the same letter which Motilal gave to Krishna was equally intended for Vijayalakshmi:

"You seem to have turned quite a little politician, but do not think that being a girl will in any way be a handicap to you. Many women have taken as great a part in the uplift of this country as any man has done and some have distinguished themselves much more than men. It is all a question of feelings towards one's country and how seriously one applies oneself to the question of uplift. There is no bar to sex – on the contrary a determined woman's influence is much greater than a man can ever sway. So there is every chance for you. You must remember that true patriotism is in your blood and unless you actively suppress it, it is bound to assert itself sooner or later."

Vijayalakshmi watched with great pleasure her brother becoming president of the Indian National Congress in 1929. Then there followed the non-violent non-co-operation and Vijayalakshmi responded to the call of the hour. She delivered burning speeches. She led processions. She organised hartals. She ran from place to place. A notice was served on her prohibiting her from taking part in the movement for one month. But she refused to obey the order. She was arrested on January 27, 1932. Her

younger sister was also arrested. All the members of the Nehru family went behind the bars. The old mother was the last to walk in.

Vijayalakshmi was sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment with fine. Her younger sister was sentenced to one year's imprisonment without fine. They were kept in the Lucknow gaol. The youngest child of Lakshmi was less than three years old. But she could not help She had to part company with her affectionate children. The country was aflame with patriotism end to end.

Vijayalakshmi describes her first experience of public speaking as follows:

"I hadn't a thought in my head and not a trace of inspiration could I get from the faces around me. It was a difficult moment. Quite suddenly something happened. The crowd before me was a part of myself. We were both part of some bigger unseen forces; the message was there, it had only to be delivered. I spoke and the crowd cheered. I was happy in my little success. After this I was called upon to speak quite often."

Vijayalakshmi had much more difficulty with the cultured classes than with the common speaking. She expected the students to be equipped with current information and so she tried to deliver a literary address but she only met with blank faces. So she started talking to them face to face in a conversational way. There she was a great success. When she became a minister in U.P. this experience of the cultured classes and their ways came to her

quite handy.

In January, 1931, Pandit Motilal Nehru fell seriously ill. Vijayalakshmi, Kamla, Krishna, Jawaharlal and other relatives hovered round his bed. At night they took turns at his bedside. If Motilal wanted anything he asked for it apologetically. He did not want to bother anybody. He thought of others. He never thought of himself.

"Often he joked with Gandhiji," says Krishna, "or teased mother about his going ahead of her and waiting to meet her in the next world, but never did he feel afraid of what he knew must be the inevitable end."

Early in the morning of February 6, 1931, Motilal passed away.

"Motilal is not dead," said Gandhiji, "he will live long."

It was the greatest shock to Vijayalakshmi. She was worn-out and haggard. She seemed to have aged overnight. Unspeakable grief was written on her face. She felt the loss very deeply. She felt utterly lost without him. The pillar of the house had fallen. Jawaharlal was like a balm to her. He consoled every member of the family.

The Nehrus were undaunted. They were all the more determined to fight for the cause for which the head of the family had laid down his life. When the non-co-operation started after the failure of the Round Table Conference, the entire family took part. Vijayalakshmi was the first to be served with a notice. Soon Kamla and Krishna also got an order to keep

aloof from political activities. But the Nehrus were born of sterner stuff. They deliberately kept silent until the Independence Day. And then they delivered fiery speeches. There was a lathi-charge and the Nehru girls were arrested. They did not offer any defence. Most of the Nehrus were in gaol. It was a good education for Lakshmi. She made many friends among the convicts.

Chapter Two

THE FIRST WOMAN MINISTER

When the general elections came off in 1936, the Congress swept the polls in seven provinces. Vijayalakshmi stood from Cawnpore-Bilhaur Rural Constituency as a candidate for the United Provinces Legislative Assembly. There were about thirty-eight thousand and nine hundred voters. Lady Srivastava, the wife of the then Minister of Education, was her opponent in the field. It was Vijayalakshmi's first experience of active political electioneering.

" Previous to that," says Vijayalakshmi, " my knowledge of elections had been vague and corresponded somewhat to Hyde Park oratory."

I. ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The election campaign was a new revelation to her. She toured the province like a whirlwind. Everywhere there was a demand for her by the Congress workers who needed her fot addressing the public meetings. She travelled by motor-car as well as by builock-cart. A contact with the poverty-stricken people enriched her experience of life. She was fighting a difficult seat. But the name of the Congress inspired the voters. They were voting for the Congress and not any individual. Many times she moved incognito and tried to fathom

the feelings of the people for her. The election was a memorable experience. Once she heard an American saying:

"What has Vijayalakshmi done?"

And she heard an Indian student speaking to him in a second-class waiting room:

"Done! She does not have to do anything. She is our mother and sister and she will win."

Vijayalakshmi won the elections by one thousand votes.

II. ENTERING THE CABINET

When the election fever was over, Vijayalakshmi received a telegram from Govind Ballabh Pant, inviting her to join the cabinet. She had no mind to join the ministry. In fact she was opposed to office-acceptance. The advice of valued friends induced her to accept the responsibility. In offering her a membership of the cabinet, the Congress was encouraging women to enter politics and that is what she herself desired. Therefore her entry into the cabinet was a great satisfaction to everybody.

On Thursday, July 29, 1937, the United Provinces Assembly met at the Assembly Hall at 11 a.m. There she took oath as the Minister for Local Self-Government. Before her ideas of the Assembly were vague and hazy. Now she had come face to face with concrete reality. She was not new to public speaking but in the Assembly she was making her maiden speech. The first resolution was to reject the Government of India Act. It was to be moved by the Premier. But Pandit Pant being ill, the burden

fell on Lakshmi Pandit. She made a courageous speech before the educated audience. She picked up the technique of the Assembly in no time. The resolution was passed in spite of opposition. It was resolved:

"This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of India Act, 1935, in no way represents the will of the nation and is wholly unsatisfactory, as it has been designed to perpetuate the subjection of the people of India. This Assembly demands that this should be repealed and replaced by a constitution for free India framed by a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise, which allows the Indian people full scope for development according to their needs and desires."

III. LAKSHMI AT WORK

"From her childhood," says Krishna, "Swarup had been a very tactful person and was eminently suited to become a minister. She seldom if ever gets agitated over anything and deals with all kinds of situations in a calm unruffled manner. Charming, self-possessed and beautiful, she had little difficulty in winning people over. As minister she was a great success. It was a difficult task she undertook to perform, never having been trained for work of that type, but she excelled herself at this and was very popular. When Swarup started taking part inp olitics, her ability as speaker surprised us all. She seemed to have been born to it and seldom showed any signs of nervousness, no matter how large the gathering which she

had to address. She speaks with fluency and ease both in Hindustani and in English."

She was perfectly new to secretariat administration but she managed to get through things efficiently and satisfactorily.

"I had," she says, "an exceedingly vague idea of the duties of a minister when on the 18th July, 1937, I entered my office room in the Civil Secretariat for the first time."

Her Personal Assistant, who was well-acquainted with the routine, wondered at her efficiency. She proceeded in an innocent almost childlike way. She enquired whether some of the superfluous furniture could be removed from her room. And it was removed. Pink carpet struck a discordant note against the apple-green distemper on the walls. She surveyed the room with a sinking heart. The pink carpet was immediately replaced by a delightful bluish green. She brought bluish green curtains from her home. She also had a green bowl furnished with flowers.

Having set right her surroundings she proceeded to work. Heaps of files were lying on the table for orders. She plunged into them straightway.

"Soon," she says, "I was engrossed in it and by the time I had read it through, felt quite competent to pass an order."

IV. IN THE LIMELIGHT

As a minister, and that too a woman, she came into limelight. The journalist and the telephone pursued her everywhere.

"It is my opinion," she said, "that two greatest pests in the world today are the telephone and the journalist. The telephone can, however, be disconnected, but the journalist cannot."

She was tired of the journalists, because they deliberately misrepresented her. Once a journalist in Europe had asked her:

"What do you think of physical culture?"

"Oh, yes," she said, "I am a believer in it especially the Indian variety."

And next day the paper announced, "Woman minister begins eighteen-hour day by standing on head!"

Her experience was similar with journalists in India as well as abroad. Once she was advocating liberty for women and she was reported as "Mrs. Pandit supporting divorce for women!"

But nevertheless, she fought doggedly for the cause of women inside and outside the Assembly. She showed a great presence of mind in facing all kinds of hecklers. Once in March, 1938, she was making a reference to women in the Assembly when a member interrupted.

"Are not," said Mr. H. G. Walford, "the women of this country depressed and suppressed?"

"Mr. Walford has rightly said," she stated, "that women are depressed and suppressed."

And then she added in a low emotional tone, "I say they are oppressed also." Her remark was surpassingly effective. But she did not end there. She would not let the

members go unremonstrated :

"And since I have this opportunity I would like to request some of the honourable members who have made such chivalrous and beautifully high-sounding speeches about women to try and come forward and translate all this beauty of words into the beauty of action."

She vigorously supported the policy of the Congress ministry for rural reconstruction. She carried policies of the Congress High Command with might and main.

"The Government desire," she said to the House, "that in every village and in every district there should be adequate arrangement to safeguard public health. Everyone should get satisfactory medical aid .... the present rate of infant mortality should be checked. We wish to do all this and we will do all this."

As the Minister for Local Self-Government she solved many difficult problems. In the budget for 1938-39 she presented a scheme proposing three hundred dispensaries in the rural areas. Two hundred dispensaries were to be under the charge of Indian practitioners of indigenous system of medicine. She was convinced of Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicines and stuck to her guns in spite of opposition from some members. Provision of maternity facilities was another arduous task which she undertook. The Red Cross Society was aided by the Government for the training of nurses, but the work was not successful.

"I regret," she said to the House, "to have to admit that these midwives (mostly Chris-

tians) are not at all popular, and in spite of the fact that Red Cross Society has turned out more midwives now who are slightly better trained and of a better social standing, still they are looked down upon with suspicion and even these *dais* are available, the women of that part prefer not to make use of their services.

" People must be convinced that the work of a midwife is not a work to be looked down upon and done by the lowest in the land but that it is honourable work. This sort of thing can only be done by propaganda."

Vijayalakshmi had the medical school for women at Agra converted into a nursing centre from January 11, 1939. A masterly anti-malarial scheme was prepared and eighty thousand rupees were provided in the budget. Thirty-five thousand rupees were provided for drinking water facilities in villages. Playgrounds were opened for exercise in towns and villages. Forty-five thousand rupees were sanctioned for forty-eight districts. The district and municipal boards were also requested to provide further facilities out of their own funds. Vijayalakshmi also had a milk scheme for children, but the idea was postponed due to financial stringency. In Agra district the experiment was tried with some success.

" We do not wish to spend," she said, " a single pie of tax-payers' money without the fullest consideration."

Referring to untouchability she said: " It is sometimes asked what has the Congress ministry done for the *Achhuts* (Untouchables).

The honourable members perhaps do not know that in the Congress there is no *Achhut.* The very word, which is repugnant to humanity, is not to be found in the Congress dictionary."

Chapter Three

FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

In the summer of 1939 the horizon in Europe was overshadowed by war-clouds. The Viceroy declared war on behalf of India and this was resented by the Congress. The Congress wanted to know the war aims of Britain. If Britain was fighting for democracy, why should not India be set free immediately? If Britain was fighting for imperialism, as she really was, why should she expect help from India which was already a victim of their imperialism?

I. ROAD TO RESIGNATION

The Congress put very rough questions to British statesmen who showed an infinite indifference to the question of India's freedom. Consequently the Congress ministries decided to resign by way of protest. In October, 1939, a resolution was presented to the United Provinces Legislative Assembly by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, the Premier of the Province. He denounced the British for having India into the war without her consent. He demanded that India should he declared independent. And India should be allowed to frame her own constitution. Mrs. Vijayalakshmi who supported the resolution said:

" Sir, I rise to support the resolution before the House.....Our country has been made a

participant in a war which is being fought many thousands of miles away from here. Our opinion and advice has not been sought, because being an enslaved nation of what value is our opinion or our advice. We are informed that this war that is being fought is a war of righteousness, that this is being fought for those principles which go to make life worth living whether for the individual or for the nation. But these brave words have ceased to have any meaning for us because throughout the centuries Britain has prefaced all declarations of war in a similar manner. It is, therefore, our right to know where we stand. It is our right to demand from Britain what the better world order is which we are to create. . . . .

" Let us put our heads together and evolve a better method of democratic procedure. . . . We have enough experience of empty promises in the past. Let us not fall into the trap again, for years and years the British policy has been to magnify our differences, seeing divergence of policies were merely differences of temperaments.

" Let us now give a challenge to Britain that the people of India stand united and if our co-operation is of any value to Britain, it can be conceded as a free nation and as an equal partner. If our just demand is rejected, the war degenerates into a war between two imperialistic powers for world domination. The interests of our country demand our unity in the face of a common and growing danger. Let us not hold back, because remember—If India dies,

who lives? If India lives, who dies?"

Vijayalakshmi Pandit had introduced many useful measures. Many more useful measures were lying on her table. In obedience to the Congress High Command she resigned the ministership leaving the good work where it was. The battle of freedom is infinitely more important than any parliamentary programme. The Congress has long realised that imperialism must be rooted out. It should not be struck branch by branch. What we want is complete independence. Petty reforms will not do. Imperialism is the source of all evils. Therefore, we must first weed it out.

II. SYMBOLIC SATYAGRAHA

Mahatma Gandhi started individual satyagraha which was intended as a token of civil disobedience. It was also meant to test the fabric of imperialism and the texture of the freedom forces in the country. Vijayalakshmi offered her services to Mahatma Gandhi. And Gandhiji enrolled her as an individual satyagrahi.

On December 9, 1940, Vijayalakshmi was arrested and she was sentenced to four months' simple imprisonment. She spent the full term in Naini Central Gaol.

While Vijayalakshmi Pandit was locked up, the country was gasping for freedom. New forces were shaping themselves and Gandhiji, the architect of destiny, was building ceaselessly in the walls of time. New ideas were surging in the masses. The monster of war was astride

in Europe. Britain could not talk peacefully of freedom and democracy any more.

III. CHIANGS COME TO INDIA

Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek visited India early in 1942. They have been since long the personal friends of Nehrus. Mrs. Vijayalakshmi organised a public reception for Madame Chiang under the auspices of All-India Women's Conference at the Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, on February 12, 1942. Vijayalakshmi read the welcome address.

"Mrs. Pandit," said Madame Chiang, "some time ago invited me to visit India, but owing to work I did not feel that I ought to leave China just then. The inward urge that I should come has been, however, latent for a long time. Therefore, when the Generalissimo decided to take the trip, this urge became crystallised into action."

Madame Chiang stayed only for a short time in India and throughout her sojourn, Vijayalakshmi accompanied her.

IV. QUIT INDIA

In August, 1942, the Indian National Congress launched upon Quit-India Movement. "Do or die" was the watchword. The Government arrested the leaders but released public passions. There was such a fury that the Government could not control it.

On August 12, 1942, Vijayalakshmi Pandit was awakened by the police in the small hours of the morning. They had come to arrest her

at that unearthly hour.

"My mind," says Lakshmi, "was a confused jumble of events of the preceding twenty-four hours. The shots fired on the students' procession were still ringing in my ears and before eyes. I could only see the faces of those young men whom I had helped to pick and remove to hospital. I was utterly weary in mind and body and more than a little dazed."

Her daughters were asleep. She went to porch and switched on the light. The verandah was full of constables.

"Why is it necessary," she enquired, "for so many men to come to arrest one unarmed woman?"

Nobody replied.

Lakshmi awakened her girls and broke to them the news. They were brave as always. They grasped the situation immediately. There was no fuss. The girls helped mummy to pack up things.

"I wish I could go too," said Rita. "Mummy darling take care of yourself. We shall be fighting the British outside while you are in."

Gaol confinement affected her health. After nine months' imprisonment she was released on account of illness. And that was only a short parole.

"With sinking heart," says Krishna, "I got out of the tonga and went in search of Swarup. I entered her room, she got up to greet me and embrace me. I put my arms around her trying not to let her see how moved I was at her changed appearance. A year ago I had seen her

looking ten years younger than she really was. Nine months she had been in gaol and was out for a few short weeks now Once more gaol had wrought havoc on a loved one and left its mark all too plainly on the face which had aged considerably in those few months."

Lakshmi and her husband were kept in the same gaol but in different wards.

"He is somewhere on the other side of the wall," writes Vijayalakshmi, "and yet how far away. I have such a longing to see and speak to him."

The daughters of Lakshmi were also arrested and kept with her in the same ward. In April, 1943, Lekha was released during the parole of her mother. She discussed with her the problem of her going to America for education. It was decided that Tara should also go. Vijayalakshmi cabled to her friends in America. The reply from the President of Wellesley College came in forty-eight hours:

"Wellesley College is proud and pleased to welcome your daughters."

It was a big relief to the mother. She had a good deal of botheration in getting dollar exchange. At last she saw off the girls and drove back to the prison.

"We shall keep the flag flying darling," said the girls as the train steamed off, "wherever we are."

V. PANDIT GIRLS IN AMERICA

Here are some of the impressions of Miss Chandralekha Pandit, the well-known daughter

of Vijayalakshmi, during her stay in America:

"The people of America came as a complete surprise to me. I had known a great many Americans in school and from time to time, friends of my parents from the New World visiting India stayed with us. I knew the American idiom, was well-versed in the latest slang phrases, was more or less brought up on salads and other food special to America, and familiar with American jazz. But somehow the American people were a new experience.

"They are a very fresh and vigorous people, friendly and genuine, spontaneous and strangely naive—a nation of adolescents not caring too much about the responsibilities fate has bestowed upon them. What strikes most Indians is the fact that on the whole they are incredibly uninformed about other countries.

"Travelling in America often reminded me of a railway journey in India. The trains are air-conditioned and clean, with comfortable chairs on each side of a passage which runs down the length of the train. But the people are as eager to talk and make friends as those one meets in an Indian railway compartment, and I have often had amusing and informative conversations on journeys. A very favourite question of the less uninhabited American was, 'What are you?' by which they meant what nationality. The *sari* bewildered many of them and led to their asking the most amazing questions. Once, while travelling to Boston, I had the seat next to a large lady who kept looking at me. Finally she smiled broadly and asked,

'My dear, are you Spanish?' I replied that I was not.

'Oh, Maxican?'

'No.'

'Greek?'

'No.'

'Portuguese?'

'No.'

'Cuban?'

'No.'

'Armenian?'

'No.'

'Egyptian?'

'No.'

Exhausted she demanded, 'Well what are you?'

'Indian,' I replied.

"A polite pause. Then, 'Really, what reservation?' If any one is as bewildered as I was, I should elucidate this remark by saying that in the United States, Red Indians, who were driven off their hands by the European pioneer settlers, are kept together in certain areas known as 'reservation'. Americans have to distinguish between the two kinds of Indians by calling us the 'snake-charmer kind'. This phrase illustrates the ignorance of the average American in matters relating to Eastern countries. This attitude was very annoying, especially when he discovered people who were college graduates and should have known better, asking ridiculous questions about the rope trick. Yet, in contrast to these were the people who know more about Indian art and music than I had

ever learned and who explained to me the philosophy of the Hindus with many quotations from the *Upanishads*.

"Strangely enough, it was the man in the street who was more intelligent and better informed than some of our college friends. Taxi-drivers, in particular, were in a class by themselves, and I think they are my favourite people in America. They are usually very outspoken and friendly. Seeing our *saris* they would invariably enquire where we were from and I do not think I ever met a taxi-driver who did not know something about India unlike a station-master who once said with appalling ignorance, 'Oh yes I think I've heard of India it's way off near China, some kind of a Crown colony.' Cab-drivers were, on the whole, politically conscious and knew considerable details of our political struggle. They would argue for or against non-violence, and because most Americans do not care much for the British, they would usually remark: 'Say, I hope you get your independence real soon. In America we believe in freedom and democracy. I'm just a cab-driver but I can go to the White House, and if I feel like it I can call the President a stinker!' This never failed to impress me.

"Once we were discussing Indian affairs in a taxi with some friends. When we arrived at our destination, the driver said, "I heard what you folks were saying. I'm Irish and I'm right with you in your fight against the British.'

"Then there were grocers. I'll never forget my amazement when I walked into a store to

buy oranges and the grocer said to me apropos of nothing : ' You're Indian, aren't you ? I know all about Gandhi. He really put your country on the map.' He was keenly interested in Indian affairs and after he knew us better, asked me complicated questions about Pakistan, separate electorates and the caste system. I could continue telling stories about friendly Americans—the waiters in the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco, who came to my mother on the day the Working Committee was released in June, 1945, and said they shared India's joy ; the newspaper boy who told my sister ' when you get back to India give my regards to Mahatma Gandhi—He's a great guy.' The girl whom we discovered reading Jawaharlal Nehru's *Autobiography* behind the counter of an expensive Fifth Avenue departmtent store.

"Americans, who came to India during the war, made an unfavourable impression on our people. They had too much money which they spent in a crude, lavish manner, and their thoroughly uninhabited behaviour in a land of traditional restraint and dignity led to the Indian public looking with disfavour upon America and things American. I feel sorry about this, as it is unfair to judge a nation by its soldiers in war time. I shall always cherish the memory of the warmth and friendship I encountered in the United States, not so much because of personal contacts although I value these, but because I knew that behind the care-free and seemingly superficial attitude of the people, was a very real sympathy for our cause and a genuine

desire to know more about us.

"As a nation Indians are very earnest, making business of living a tedious matter. For long we have concentrated on our political struggle with its various aspects—dignity, poverty, disease, ignorance. A drabness has therefore crept into our lives replacing the *joie de vivre* which, according to historical documents and our store of ancient literature, was always a heritage of the Indian people. We have let our culture stagnate, we have allowed our laughter to be stilled.

"To live in America is to live anew. Being a free nation, the Americans do not feel the need of wasting all their energies on political activity. Their lives are enriched by all manner of cultural and social activity which has built up their country. The American people have vivacity, and inexhaustible energy which enlarges their capacity for work as well as their enjoyment of life. And their informality appeals to those whose lives, like ours, have for centuries been bound by rigid conventions.

"It is this zest for living and capacity to work that attracted me towards America, and a little of which I endeavoured to absorb so that I may do my small part in helping our India to become once more a land of freedom and happiness."

Chapter Four

THE UNOFFICIAL AMBASSADOR

When the Pandit girls were in America, they prepared a ground for the visit of their mother, because when Mrs. Vijayalakshmi left the shores of India in November, 1944, her attraction was not glamour of the New World but rather her girls who were separated from her. Now that the prison walls were removed, she could not keep away from the flesh of her flesh and the bone of her bone. Oceans are no hindrance to maternal affections.

I. SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

The conference of the United Nations was to be held at San Francisco in May, 1945. India was represented by such puppets as Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar and Sir Feroze Khan Noon. The people of India were highly indignant. The only hope of nationalism was the presence of Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit in America. And well did she rise up to our hopes. She arrived at San Francisco towards the end of April, 1945, and made it her centre of activities.

" Now that Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit is at San Francisco," stated an English paper of India, " her presence there must be giving the Indian delegation sleepless nights."

There is little doubt of that. Indians in America, men and women, arrived at San

Francisco from hundreds of miles to welcome Vijayalakshmi and load her with flowers. Mr. J. J. Singh and Dr. Anup Singh were of particular use to her in arranging for her programme and publicity. She fired her lead directly at the U.N.O.

"I desire to make it clear," she said, "that the so-called Indian representatives attending the San Francisco Conference have not the slightest representative capacity. They have no sanction, no mandate from any of the responsible groups in India and are merely nominees of the British Government. Anything they say here or any vote they cast can have no binding effect or force on the people of India."

The message of Lakshmi resounded in U.S.A. and her words had the desired effect. Thus Mr. Iftone, the well-known journalist, worte :

"They (Indian delegates) have been chosen by the Government without consultation of Indian parties or political leaders most of whom are still in gaol including the far-seeing Nehru who would have shown even in the gathering of giants."

The Indian representatives were fully aware of their unrepresentative character. They felt shy of the American journalists who put to them very unpleasant questions. Their conferences were thinly attended while Vijayalakshmi was drawing all the crowds. Sir Feroze Khan Noon tried to use his stenographer as a heckler at the press conference of Lakshmi but the secret soon leaked out and the heckler was disgracefully pushed out of the conference.

"It must have been most uncomfortable for his boss," wrote Mr. Pasbom of the *Associated Press of America*, "to learn today that the efforts of his stooge instead of disrupting Mrs. Pandit's press conference have boomeranged and Mrs. Pandit has received much wider publicity both at the radio and the press than she might have otherwise. Yesterday evening papers and this morning's papers have given her a prominent space with pictures. One paper had a big picture of Mrs. Pandit being garlanded by Amritlal Seth and a small picture of Khan with his name and 'ejected from conference'."

On behalf of the India League of America and the National Committee for India's Freedom Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit submitted a memorandum to the San Francisco Conference. She called for an immediate declaration of India's independence. She described the Indian problem as "the acid test of the principles on which the hopes of the conference are postulated."

She stated that India's dependent status is "not only grave moral and political wrong to India but a travesty of the claim that the United Nations' Conference consists of representatives of sovereign states. The imperialist system should now be renounced in principle and abandoned in practice by an unequivocal acknowledgment and declaration of a free India."

Mrs. Pandit declared that she also spoke on behalf of Burma, Malaya, Indo China and Dutch Indies for whom she claimed "liberation from all alien imperialism."

In the memorandum she described herself as

"Madame Vijayalakshmi Pandit, spokesman for India."

"We all know," said Commissar Molotov, "that a time will come when the voice of independent India will be heard."

"Why should not such a voice be heard now ?" asked Vijayalakshmi. "The Indian National Congress Party, representing the Indian people, has always stood uncompromisingly against fascism, nazism and imperialism."

She brought out the case of India from every angle and placed it in the limelight :

"The voice of some six hundred million enslaved people of Asia may not be officially heard at this conference and those who have usurped their birthright and freedom may cynically claim to speak for them, but there will be no real peace on this earth so long as they are denied justice. Recognition of India's independence now will be a proclamation and assurance to the whole world that the statement of the United Nations assembled at the solemn conclave at San Francisco have in truth and honour heralded the dawn of a new and better day for an all but crucified humanity."

Mrs. Lakshmi Pandit met President Truman and Lady Truman. She entertained Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. She met a large number of prominent visitors from abroad and presented India's case to everybody.

II. MESSAGE TO AMERICA

Vijayalakshmi spoke beneath the gold dome of California Sacramento. She stated that new

ties forged between India and America will solve problems of the world.

Mrs. Pandit spoke passionately to the members of the California Legislature who had honoured her with an invitation. She said:

"So long as the colonial vested interests remain, there can be no peace, there can be no security. And so long as there is no security or peace, we shall go on destroying all that generations and centuries of human effort have built up. I believe these new ties will work for common good between peoples of the world—because it is the people who are going to build up the world structure."

The California Legislature had adjourned a debate on the State's budget to hear her speak. They sat at the back of rows of desks littered with financial papers to hear her eloquent address. There was a full house to hear her speak. They sat in silence. They applauded only when the speech was over. Mr. Ernst Debbs, thanking her on behalf of the Legislators, said:

"A hundred and fifty years ago we in the United States were striving for the same thing which you are striving for. I feel strongly on the subject of freedom not for India but for all peoples of the world."

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit visited Baltimore on April 9, 1945. Her visit received the highest official recognition. The Mayor of Baltimore welcomed her at the station and presented her "Keys of the City." These keys are reserved for the most notable guests. In her lecture in the city's largest auditorium thirty per cent of

the audience consisted of Negroes, Indians, Chinese and Japanese.

"India stands for equality," said Mrs. Pandit.

On May 15, 1945, she spoke to five thousand Sikhs near California. She spoke from the dais in the famous Stockton Sikh temple which is the only building of its kind in America.

"Our fight," said Lakshmi, "is much bigger than the fight for freedom of just one people. It is a fight for a world-wide freedom. You Americans have been watching San Francisco and hoping that from this conference will come a just and lasting peace. But it cannot be success when the people who are there claim to settle the destiny of the world without first consulting the wishes of the people of the world. For us—who are outside the conference—it is very important to draw the attention of the delegates to the principles of right and justice on which a lasting peace must be built. Our leaders forget when deciding on important issues that personal freedom is one of the most important concepts upon which world peace is founded.

"Today we cannot afford to make any mistakes in planning the future of mankind. We made some grave mistakes after the last war and endured unheard-of miseries and sufferings. Today the world cannot endure any more suffering. This time we have to decide to make good the mistakes made after the last war.

"Only through the freedom of India can we contribute to the freedom of the rest of the

world."

Vijayalakshmi also addressed the American public over the radio. She said in a broadcast talk :

"Not the atomic bomb but greater explosives of greed and imperialism threaten the world today."

Vijayalakshmi Pandit spared no pains to put forward the cause of India and other suppressed people of the world in the most courageous and convincing spirit. Her message to America is summed up in the following extract from one of her speeches in America :

"In the freedom of India lies the hope of a settlement of the world problem. Free India becomes a force for good in the East and the whole problem of Pacific becomes more easy of solution. A discontented India means a discontented Asia. There can be no lasting peace unless it is based on the recognition of human rights. The first step in this direction is the freedom of those countries still under foreign domination. Unless this is done, the present global conflict becomes merely a war for power with no moral sanction behind it. Statements are not enough. Good intentions do not go very far. It is only actions that will help in clarifying the issues and so far no such action has been taken by the United Nations. If the plan for post-war world is to concentrate on power and to impose systems of security on weaker nations, it is bound to fail. Civilisation is not a monopoly of the whiteman. Asia and Africa have a heritage which stretches

far back into antiquity and the world is as much in need of a message of these great continents as any that Europe and America have to give."

Chapter Five

THE OFFICIAL AMBASSADOR

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit returned to India as a heroine towards the end of January, 1946. She had hauled the British imperialists and badly mauled their Indian apologists. She was profusely garlanded as she landed at the American airbase at Karachi.

In spite of the warm American hospitality, she returned to India perfectly a disillusioned woman. For one thing she does not believe in America's professions of international democracy. Uncle Sham is playing John bull's game. Consequently she does not want that patriots in India should be misled by castles in the air which U.S.A. is always building for innocent slaves of imperialism. India must win freedom by dint of her own strength.

World is not going to be ruled by Anglo-American imperialism, and India has little to hope from outside her country. America and Britain are thick as thieves. And India does not look for a seat in the gang of robbers.

Returning home Mrs. Vijayalakshmi picked up the threads of the unfinished yarn of constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi as stoutly as ever. She stood again for elections and was re-elected. Once again she became a minister in the Congress Cabinet for the United Provinces and back she came to her chair in the

U.P. Secretariat. Once again she picked up the reform acts which she could not carry through before the ministerial crisis in 1939. She had come to do many things left undone or only half-done. The wheel had come full circle, but India of 1940 was not the India of 1939. Vijayalakshmi could hear the drums of freedom behind the blue mountains. Will freedom come? Come it must. And if it is late in coming, Vijayalakshmi will rush to meet it half-way. And if necessary she will gladly die in the path of independence.

"We may be still behind other nations," said Vijayalakshmi, "but the dawn breaks and the first bright rays are stealing over the country giving hope to many weary hearts. . . . India would live and her future would grow into a glorious thing."

* * * *

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi voyaged again to America in October, 1946, to defend helpless Indian minority in Africa against the onslaughts of General Smuts.

In a message broadcast on the eve of her departure to the U.N.O. General Assembly, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit said:

"In proceeding to the General Assembly of the United Nations, we are very conscious of the heavy responsibility that has been placed upon us.

"Little more than a year ago the organisation of the United Nations came into existence and the representative Assembly at San Francisco agreed to reaffirm faith in fundamental

human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations, large and small, and the world, grown weary with much bloodshed and suffering, turned hopeful eyes towards the new organisation, which promised to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of intolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours.

"Today the fundamental rights so recently promised to the peoples of the world are being denied to Indians living in South Africa, thus raising a question of moral and human issues which contain the gravest implications for the future peace and progress of the world. The Indian delegation's task will be to claim for Indians in South Africa the removal of all restrictions imposed on them on grounds of race and colour and ensure to them the fundamental freedoms to which they are entitled.

"In fighting for those who share this denial of human rights and who suffer under foreign control, India stands for equality between peoples and for the independence of all colonial areas. We believe that an enduring peace cannot be achieved so long as there is discrimination against one race by another. This policy continues to sow the seeds of bitterness and strife in many parts of the globe and must be ended now and for all time, thus making it possible for the peoples of the world to contribute in building up the future. The Indian case in South Africa becomes, therefore, a test case not only on the question of human rights

but also for the purposes and principles of the charter itself.

"We go to our task hopefully in the knowledge that we carry with us the support and goodwill of the men and women of India.

I. THE COLOURED MAN ON THE MARCH

General Smuts' reference to the South African Indian issue and his claim of the spiritual leadership of Europe in his speech at Brussels were challenged by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations Organisation Conference in New York at a press conference.

Mrs. Pandit observed: "We challenge his statement regarding the spiritual leadership of Europe. The emphasis he has given and the fact that he has completely ignored the rest of the world itself shows that no matter how high sounding his phrases may be, he is not prepared to build up a new world on foundations of justice which will ensure peace and prosperity of future generations. There are other countries in the world outside Europe whose contributions to the thought, culture and regeneration of the world has been as great, if not greater, than the contributions ever made by Europe. They cannot be disposed of in this casual fashion. The fate of the world depends upon the recognition of the fact that all nations must co-operate as equals in re-shaping the future. If this basic fact is not realised the human race is doomed. We believe that Asia has a great part to play in the shape of things to come. We are con-

fident that our past will be a worthy one."

Clarifying how the South African Indian issue formed a test case, Mrs. Pandit pointed out that the problem of depressed classes in India was not a racial problem whereas the South African Indian issue contained in it the seeds of the world war three. It was a question of domination of white over the black. The coloured man was on the march and he would not tolerate the domination by the white because of the colour of the skin. It was, therefore, a fundamental human issue and it must go before the bar of world opinion. No one individual, however great, should deal with it.

She continued: "India stands for complete equality between peoples of the world and between the nations of the world and as such India would take up the cause of any nation or any people whose fundamental human rights are denied. When those people happen to be from the mother countries India naturally shows more interest than in the cause of others."

Mrs. Pandit claimed that the delegation was fortunate in having the entire people of India behind it in the matter of South African Indian issue.

The proposed Pan-Asiatic Conference convened by Pandit Nehru, she said, would also discuss questions dealing with Asiatics under the white domination. She hoped that leading women of Asia would attend the conference.

II. PORTUGUESE FASCISM

During U.N.O. deliberations, Mrs. Pandit

favoured Eire but opposed Portugal's application for membership.

Regretting that Eire had not been recommended by the Security Council for membership Mrs. Pandit said: "We feel that Eire fully satisfies the conditions laid down in the Charter. India has always had a certain fundamental sympathy with Eire. Eire is not merely a peace-loving, but a freedom-loving country, eminently fitted for membership of the United Nations.

"Eire could not be admitted as an original member of the United Nations, because at that time the definition of a peace-loving country was that it should have declared war. That definition is no longer applicable.

"We feel that Eire fully satisfies the conditions laid down in Article 4 of the Charter.

"India has always had a certain fundamental sympathy with Eire. Like India, Eire has fought long and hard for her freedom. Indeed our eminent patriots used to follow Irish methods for obtaining freedom. Later, however, thanks to the gospel of non-violence elaborated by Mahatma Gandhi, we have been following a different and noble method for the achievement of freedom."

Mrs. Pandit said: "This, however, does not detract from our admiration for the tenacity and vigour with which Eire conducted her own struggle. Eire is thus, not merely peace-loving but a freedom-loving country, eminently fitted for membership of the United Nations."

Mrs. Pandit said that the Indian delegation felt that Transjordan should also be a member

of the United Nations. "We have sympathy with Transjordan as a Middle East State, which has recently obtained independence. Doubts have been expressed in the Committee regarding the degree of independence which she has obtained, even if these doubts were justified, we feel that they should not stand in the way of Transjordan's membership of the United Nations. I say this as a subject of a country which has herself not yet obtained complete independence."

Mrs. Pandit said that the Indian delegation felt that the question of Albania's admission to the United Nations should be reconsidered. "I was impressed by the figures given by the Soviet delegate regarding the sacrifices made by Albania, which was one of the first victims in the struggle against fascism and nazism during the war."

Mrs. Pandit continued: "Among the applicants for admission to the United Nations there is, in our opinion, one country and one only, which is definitely not fitted to be a member of the United Nations—I mean Portugal. I say this with regret, for I am fully aware of the magnificent contribution which Portugal has made to the sum total of human civilisation. The fact that a country had a great past should not blind us to its present conduct.

"The Portuguese Government is from all accounts, authoritarian. It has distinctly a fascist flavour and its collaboration with Franco Spain does not add to its credit.

"Moreover, its colonial policy is thoroughly

reactionary. I speak from experience, for we know what the Portuguese policy is and the manner in which Portugal has been dealing with her subjects in the tiny Portuguese settlement of Goa in India."

Mrs. Pandit said that the Portuguese Administration in India formed a glaring contrast with that of the French Administration of their own settlements.

"Here I would like to pay a tribute to the French authorities who have been following a liberal policy and who declared their intention to respect the wishes of the people of French settlements in India in regard to their future relations with the Indian Government," said Mrs. Pandit.

Expressing the Indian delegation's satisfaction that Afghanistan, Iceland and Sweden were going to be admitted to the United Nations, Mrs. Pandit said that she felt that if the General Assembly thought that the Security Council had refused to recommend a State for membership on inadequate or unfair grounds, then it was open to, and indeed incumbent on, the General Assembly to ask the Security Council to reconsider its attitude. "For these reasons India will support any resolution which has this object in view."

III. MORAL ISSUES FOR INDIA

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, speaking at a reception given by the India League of America to Indian delegates to the United Nations General Assembly, said: "We regard the

struggle of Indians in South Africa as a symbolic one. We look on what is happening in South Africa as a very grave challenge and unless the people who today are forming policies of the world realise how deep the current of hatred is, this discrimination, they will find, will once again bring the world into a conflict greater than it has ever known.

"The question should not be dealt with emotionally but in a manner which will peaceably solve the situation which has already sown seeds of very grave consequences. It threatens to envelop the whole human race if it is allowed to grow. We have to combine and do our very best to deal with it on a moral and political basis – on a basis that, what is said in the Unity Charter, must be implemented or it will amount to a mockery."

Mrs. Pandit asserted that India could stand and hold up her head in spite of difficulties. "In spite of coercing India has retained her moral values and has never been sidetracked from moral issues. We are still far from independence in India but a large number of people in India today know that independence is not so much a political condition as a state of mind."

IV. THE DRAMATIC DUEL

On November 22, 1946, there was a dramatic duel between Marshal Smuts and Mrs. Pandit in the U.N.O.

The body which heard their rival speeches was the joint committee of the Political and Legal Committees meeting under the chairman-

ship of Senor Roberto Jimenez of Panama to consider the Indian complaint against South Africa.

The first speaker was Mrs. Pandit who presented India's case in a soft low voice. She was suffering from a cold and sat at the table with an overcoat over her *sari*.

The committee room was thronged with many people standing in its adjoining corridors to hear the battle between India and South Africa. There were many Indians in the public seats.

The Indian delegation appeared in full force, and sitting immediately behind Mrs. Pandit was the Bombay jurist, Justice M. C. Chagla.

There was a dead hush as Mrs. Pandit read her statement slowly and clearly. General Smuts sat quietly with little change of expression reflected on his face.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit declared: "The issue is a political not a legal one—not even an issue between the two countries alone, but in the possibilities of its extent, a world issue.

"It calls for an effort in statesmanship. It will not be solved by unilateral insistence on some narrow concept of domestic jurisdiction. The only method of peaceable solution open in our opinion is the exercise by the United Nations of their collective wisdom and moral sanction in the cause of justice and fair play.

"The Government of India submit in all earnestness that their dispute with South Africa is properly a matter for discussion and disposal by the Assembly because the legislation to

which they object offends against the purposes of the Charter. They submit with equal emphasis that the Assembly is concerned with this dispute because the law to which they object is not only 'likely to' but has already impaired friendly relations between the two member nations."

Mrs. Pandit added: "It has been urged that since conditions in India are worse than anything that exists in South Africa, Indians should not complain of the provisions of the Tenure Act which are designed to avert racial tensions that may endanger peace of all communities. The danger of this argument, proved by practical experience, lies in the fact that each new concession to prejudices of the politically dominant European community has led to fresh demands for racial discrimination. Comparison with conditions in India is profoundly misleading.

"In India we are doing everything in our power to remove as rapidly as possible social evils which are an inheritance of the past. Neither in India nor before world opinion do we seek to justify this. In the Union what is being done is the reverse process of legislation disabilities which with us never had the force of law and which we are contending not without success to remove. Disappearing evils of India are not examples for the introduction of new or perpetuation of old evils in South Africa.

"The legal argument that the Government of the Union of South Africa are competent to legislate for any class of its nationals without in-

terference does not dispose of the fact that the legislation in question has resulted in severance of relations between India and Africa. Inasmuch as the cause of the dispute is racial, subordination of just claims of members of the race to unjust demands of another, its repercussions will extend beyond South Africa and India."

General Smuts delivered his "Defence" in quiet but emphatic tones occasionally rolling his head from one side to the other to bring out a point in his speech. At the conclusion of his statement General Smuts raising his voice slightly, moved his formal resolution that the matter be referred to the international court of advisory judgment on the "domestic jurisdictional aspects of the case."

The chairman suggested that the best procedure would be the appointment of a sub-committee of both legal and political committee representatives.

V. LAKSHMI ATTACKS BRITAIN

On November 28, 1946, opened the debate in the United Nations Joint Political and Legal Committee, where India's complaint against South Africa on the treatment of Indians in the Union was being discussed. The Chinese delegate, Dr. Wellington Koo, declared that his delegation had grave doubts on the wisdom of submitting the issue to the International Court of Justice.

Dr. Koo proposed that a small sub-committee including Indian and South African delegates be appointed to study the various proposals before

the Joint Committee and submit a draft resolution suggesting basis for a resumption of negotiations between the two parties concerned for a satisfactory settlement of the case.

Mr. Juraj Slavik for Czechoslovakia appealed to the Indians and South Africans to try to find a solution to the problem among themselves.

The Argentine delegate, Senor Enrique Vieyra, supported the reference to the International Court, but M. Milan Bartos (Yugoslavia) supported the Indian case.

The Chilean delegate, Senor Felix Nieto Del Rio, urged that South Africa should suspend the Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act.

For America, Mr. Charles Fahy, supporting South Africa's proposal to seek advice from the International Court, said: "It seems to me there is something unfair, under the very trying circumstances of this case, to ask fifty-three nations to unite against one of its members and intervene for the first time in the history of the United Nations."

Sir Hartley Shawcross, urging unanimity in the request to advise the International Court, said that any decision by a narrow majority whether favouring or against India would do nothing, but create contempt in India and division in South Africa.

The Ukrainian delegate, M. Dmitri Manuilsky, strongly urged the Committee not to refer the matter to a sub-committee as proposed by Dr. Wellington Koo, but to deal with it "now—today."

Mr. Heaton Nicholls (South Africa)

contended that it was probably the opinion of the judicial tribunal that the matter would have more influence upon the public everywhere than political opinion expressed by the Joint Committee.

Mrs. Pandit, in her speech, said that the matter was one which affected issues that should be decided by the Joint Committee and the fifty-four persons round the Committee table. "Does it not stand to reason that South Africa is able to do this (treatment of Indians) because of the support she received from two great nations," she asked.

Mrs. Pandit said she was approaching the problem "as my countrymen" were, in a spirit of extreme friendliness, without bitterness and without vindictiveness.

"When I was coming here, I saw Mahatma Gandhi, who is very much interested in this whole case. He said to me as I was leaving: 'I do not mind whether you come back having won your case or having suffered defeat, but you must come back as a friend of General Smuts,' and that is not what any man in Mahatma Gandhi's position would have said."

Mrs. Pandit disclosed that she met General Smuts the other day at a reception. "I was glad to meet him because this issue which we have placed before this Committee is one by which we want to remove bitterness that exists in the world today—we want to remove suspicion that is playing such havoc between men and men today," she said.

Mrs. Pandit vigorously criticised Sir Hartley

Shawcross for the manner in which he supported South Africa.

" As far as India is concerned," Mrs. Pandit continued, " we have brought this case here that the world may know that we at least believe in the Charter and as far as possible for its implementation. We think that only in implementation of the Charter lies the future of the human race."

A long and fiery debate started on the procedure of voting. Egypt, the United States, Britain, China, Norway, Poland, Ukraine, Panama, India, Brazil, Ethiopia, Columbia and South Africa all entered the debate again with their ideas of how the amendments should be voted.

Sir Hartley Shawcross took the floor again saying: " Mrs. Pandit made a somewhat bitter attack on me. I do not consider it worthwhile to reply.

" Yesterday I suggested to Indians that if they wanted to avoid any long delay on a decision of this issue, it should be referred immediately to the International Court which could then send it back to the Economic and Social Council."

" This would obviate anything like year's delay. I doubt whether a delay of two or three months will be very serious, especially when one realises we are not going to get two-thirds majority on this thing one way or the other," Sir Hartley continued.

He then asked the committee to take the vote. India's delegate, Mr. Justice Chagla,

intervened, however saying: "It is cruelly unfair on those who are suffering in South Africa to waste any time in reaching a decision on this issue. It is not right that matters should be referred to the International Court at a time when the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa goes on in this poisoned atmosphere. I ask that the Indian resolution be voted on first."

The Ethiopian delegate, Mr. Blatta Meden, then moved an adjournment to "avoid any precipitate action being taken tonight."

Mr. Heaton Nicholls objected, saying "The vote ought to be taken as soon as possible. If this political body after listening to a few debating speeches condemns South Africa without having any evidence except hearsay, which would not be accepted in any court of law, it would be condemning South Africa on hearsay."

The adjournment was then agreed to by twenty-seven votes to eight with several abstentions.

VI. WE HAVE TO FIGHT HARD

Justice M. C. Chagla, temporarily taking over from Mrs. Pandit the leadership of the Indian delegation, in the discussion, vigorously opposed General Smuts' suggestion that the matter be referred to the court. "General Smuts has made no concession, whatsoever, because he does not consider the very point we are fighting for, namely that this Assembly is quite competent to decide this important matter," he added.

Justice Chagla declared that the Indian

delegation would be prepared to consider the appointment of a commission by the General Assembly to go to South Africa to investigate the matter on the spot, but the Indian delegation would not agree to the suggestion made by General Smuts that the International Court of Justice could send such a commission.

Justice Chagla said: "It would be fatal for this body to allow the Court of International Justice to be dragged into politics."

M. Andrei Gromyko (Soviet Russia) said that he was of the view that the supplementary proposal made by General Smuts "does not modify in any way the substance of the original South African resolution."

Mrs. Pandit's statement withdrawing the Indian resolution led to one-and-half hour's procedural discussion as to how the Committee should vote. Prominent among those who took part in the sarcastic and heated exchange as to the interpretation of rules of procedure were: Sir Hartley Shawcross, the Chairman, M. Manuilsky and M. Gromyko.

Intervening for the third time, Sir Hartley told M. Manuilsky, "If the rules of procedure are looked at, I should not have to intervene again."

At one point the Chairman, in a long explanation why the French-Mexican proposal should be voted first, said: "An international obligation has been violated." On the decision to vote on the French-Mexican proposal first, the United States (Mr. Charles Fahy) followed closely by Greece, Netherlands, Luxembourg,

New Zealand and Brazil explained why they would vote against it.

One-hour-and-three-quarters after the meeting opened, the vote started. It was obviously going to be a closed decision. In fact the last four votes of all-in-all in favour—turned the decision and the French-Mexican proposal was adopted by twenty-four votes to nineteen with six abstentions.

The vote made voting on the other motion to send the matter to the International Court unnecessary and constituted a victory for the Indian delegation.

Mrs. Pandit was overwhelmed with congratulations on the announcement of the vote. The meeting immediately adjourned and delegates crowded round her. Mrs. Pandit, who was wearing a pink carnation, edged her way through the crowd and smilingly walked up to General Smuts. The heads of the two delegations, which conducted a bitter campaign in the committee, shook hands.

"Well, are you satisfied?" General Smuts asked.

Mrs. Pandit smiled and replied: "Well I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. The point which I presented for my people has gained a hearing."

General Smuts said: "I appreciated your statement. I thought it very good.

Then in serious tones General Smuts said: "You should not have talked about South African war criminals."

Mrs. Pandit quickly denied that she made

any reference to South African war criminals. "What I said was crimes in Soutb Africa were similar to those which led to the war," she said.

General Smuts replied: "God forbid."

General Smuts appeared to have accepted her explanation and turning to leave said warmly: "My dear child, you and I have to fight hard in the world."

Chapter Six

THE TIRELESS WARRIOR

Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit continued her battle relentlessly against the giant of South Africa, General Smuts, whose marriage with British imperialism was celebrated in the blood-bath of the Bœr War in which Mahatma Gandhi had worked as a stretcher-bearer. The heroic scenes of the war of independence in South Africa had also inspired Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his lonely nook in London. Jan Smuts had forgotten the noble qualities of the Indian nation whose representatives under Mahatma Gandhi had rendered noble services to South Africa in the Bœr War as well as the First World War; and whose soldiers in Egypt had defended Africa against the hordes of Hitler under Rommel only a few months before the war in Europe was over. Jan Smuts, like a stone-boiled imperialist, had forgotten all the noble services rendered by Indians to South Africa and had picked up the threads of colour superiority complex as soon as Hitler had committed suicide and the wolf of war was staved off the doors of his country. Nay, he threw even the Atlantic Charter into the dustbin which he had fervently advocated when British imperialism was in the oven. Against all this Mrs. Pandit had to fight

I. INDIA VERSUS SOUTH AFRICA

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, commenting on the result of the voting on India's complaint against South Africa, said it was India's second victory—a victory not in narrow sense, but it was a victory of fundamental principles. She felt satisfied with the result.

On behalf of the Government of India she thanked all those nations which had supported India's case.

Before the voting on the French-Mexican proposal was taken, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation, announced that the delegation had decided to withdraw the Indian resolution in favour of the joint resolution submitted by the delegations of France and Mexico. This resolution requires the Governments of South Africa and India to report at the next session of the General Assembly what measures had been adopted to effect a settlement of the dispute.

The resolution declared that the General Assembly report, subject to confirmation, the opinion that the "treatment of Indians in the Union should be in conformity with international obligations under the agreements concluded between the two Governments and the relevant provisions of the Charter."

Mrs. Pandit, speaking in soft warm tones, told the committee: "In view of the fact that we are not here on any vindictive spirit, that our sole object is to create conditions in the world by which not only peace might prevail and that the United Nations can function and reach

their achievements, we do not wish to place in the way of this committee any difficulties in the matter of voting."

She appealed to other delegates, who have presented amendments to the Indian resolution, to withdraw them in favour of the joint proposal of France and Mexico.

General Smuts said : " My Government has consented to the matter being referred to the International Court It will agree to that reference being enlarged so as to include facts as well as law. The court may conduct an enquiry it thinks right on the facts sent by the commission to South Africa, if it wishes so as to establish true facts to arrive at true determination of law.

" We are not able ro agree in the circumstances which have arisen here, and in the face of the attack which has included a suggestion that we occupy a position comparable to Nazi war criminals. I, therefore, make a suggestion that the matter be referred to the court with the enlarged power to go not only into law but facts as far as they come under the matter of law."

But General Smuts' suggestion for reference to the International Ccurt was not accepted as the majority of the delegates were in favour of adopting the French-Mexican proposal.

II. END THE FRANCO REGIME!

Concerted action by members of the United Nations for ending the Franco regime in Spain was urged by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit when the Political and Security Committee of the

General Assembly resumed its discussions on the Spanish issue.

Mrs. Pandit asserted that India was glad to express her whole-hearted support and sympathy with the people of Spain. She expressed her complete condemnation and detestation of the Franco regime.

Mrs. Pandit added: " When Manchuria was attacked by Japan it was India that first raised her voice in condemnation and, by way of gesture to China, started a nation-wide boycott of Japanese goods which was most successful.

" I appeal to all States to make known to the world in no uncertain terms their attitude towards the Franco Government and to act consistently with principles of the United Nations. The matter cannot be regarded as a domestic issue since it contains the possibility of a threat to the peace of the world. It must, therefore, be treated as of international importance and immediate and unanimous action should be taken by which the Spanish people may be helped in ending the fascist Franco regime."

III. HEAR THE VOICELESS PEOPLE!

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, addressing the plenary session of the United Nations Assembly on the question of the treatment of Indians in South Africa, declared: " The admissions made by the South-African Government in regard to racial discrimination and racial segregation, its repeated attempts to embody them in law and its unquestioned practices in gross violation of the Charter constitute an indictment which is proved

by these admissions. Over many years my Government, irrespective of its constitution and character, has appealed, complained, protested and sought compromise and agreements and finally, has been forced into retaliation and bring the matter before the bar of world opinion. The Union Government has taken no step, and even during the proceedings of this Assembly, have not given the slightest indication that it contemplates even temporary suspension of even the latest instalment of its offending legislation.

"Both the Head of the South-African Government, the reputed author of the preamble, and his Government stand deeply committed to honour the obligations, both in spirit and letter of the Charter. Unless the fifty-four nations assembled here place on the Charter a meaning and significance far below what its words convey in other words, unless our professed allegiance to it is a mockery—then the issue no longer rests with India or South Africa, but with us, the nations of the world assembled, who have taken upon themselves the defence of law, ethics and morality of nations.

"It is too late now to argue that fundamental violations of the principles of the Charter are matters of domestic jurisdiction of member States. If this was the case, the Charter would be a dead letter and our professions about a world free of any qualities of race, free from want and free from care are an empty mockery."

Mrs. Pandit made a special appeal to the United Kingdom and other Dominions to lend full support to the recommendations of the Joint

Political and Legal Committee, which last week, by a vote of twenty-four to nineteen, endorsed the French-Mexican proposal that the treatment of Indians in the Union should be in conformity with international obligations under agreements concluded between two Governments and relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter. She added: "The Government of the United Kingdom have all along through statements made by Secretaries of State and others deprecated discrimination against Indians in South Africa.

"Let us attempt to realise the tremendous responsibilities we, as members of the United Nations, have at this stage. We are trustees of the future—architects of a new world. If we continue to act in accordance with old prejudices and old conceptions, which we have so often condemned, we shall betray the trust reposed in us.

"Millions of voiceless people who, because of their creed or colour, have been relegated to positions of inferiority, are looking up to us for justice and it is only on the foundations of justice that we can enact a new world order. We must remember in the present case that the minds of millions of people in India and other parts of Asia and Africa have been moved to intense indignation at all forms of racial discrimination, which stands focussed on the problem of South Africa.

"This is a test case. Shall we fail in this test? I say, no."

Mrs. Pandit declared that she asked for a

verdict of the Assembly on a proved violation of the Charter, on an issue which has led to an acute dispute between two member States, on an issue which is not confined to India or South Africa and, finally, on an issue, a decision on which must make or mar the loyalty and confidence which the common people of the world would have placed in us.

"Mine," she declred, "is an appeal to a conscience—the conscience of the world which this Assembly is."

IV. THE OPPRESSED HAVE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit speaking for the second time in twenty-four hours in the debate on the Indian-South African issue, said:

"When I spoke yesterday, I expressed the hope that the British Commonwealth would at least remain neutral in this controversy, which vitally concerns one of its most important members, but Sir Hartley Shawcross' speech has shattered my hopes. He has spoken in a manner which I consider to be entirely partisan, however full of dialectic skill it may be.

"I shall only deal with two points—Sir Hartley made the suggestion that any resolution passed by this Assembly by a narrow majority is not obligatory and, therefore, he suggests that we should get a decision of the International Court. What is obligatory about the decision of the International Court?

"If a solemn resolution of this Assembly can be flouted, what certainty is there that a decision

of the International Court, if it goes against the Union, will not also be flouted ?

" Is this all the respect that members of this great organisation are going to show to the resolutions passed by this Assembly if the decisions happen to go against them ? The second point is a reference by Sir Hartley Shawcross to the unfortunate, but I hope temporary, differences which exist in India today. I regret I must say that Sir Hartley has not shown good taste in referring to these differences which he knows have been brought about largely by the roll the British Government has played between various elements in our country in the long history of Indo-British relations. I leave this Assembly to form its own view on this. India is struggling for freedom and, at the same time, grappling with her internal difficulties with every hope of overcoming them."

Mrs. Pandit declared that whichever way the vote went, she wanted to thank the Assembly and express, with all the sincerity at her command, gratitude not only of the people of India and Indians in South Africa, but of millions in every country whose hearts have been warmed and whose minds infused by this impressive expression of world opinion in defence of justice and fundamental human rights."

Turning to the chairman, Dr. Paul Henri Spaak, she said warmly : " Let me thank you and this Assembly for what already amounts to a great act of faith. We shall remember this and know in a way that cannot be forgotten, that

justice, truth and the oppressed have friends in every country and under every climate.

"This is all I want to say. I shall make no appeal. I left it with your conscience yesterday. I am content to let it rest there"

V. SMUTS OVERSHADOWED

"India's victory over South Africa in the United Nations General Assembly is linked with the personality of Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit," wrote a correspondent of the *New York Post.*

The correspondent added: "The General Assembly threw away the colour line last midnight and United States and Britain, stalwart defenders of South Africa's Western civilisation, were beaten by a slender little lady with silvery hair. She is Mrs. Pandit, the first lady of India, who won the two-thirds vote of the Assembly to support her efforts to halt the oppressive treatment of her racial fellows in South Africa.

"Throughout the two days of debate, it was Mrs. Pandit who swayed the sympathies of the delegates and the public. Her eloquent words and clear, high voice dominated the proceedings and for the time being placed in a shadow the gaunt white-bearded figure of South Africa's leader, General Smuts."

VI. OUR FAITH JUSTIFIED

Before leaving New York by air for London, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit said in a statement: "Our faith in the United Nations has been justified. Not only has India's honour been vindicated, but the United Nations

Organisation has shown itself a guardian of human rights. This augurs hope for the future of the organisation and for civilisation. India is happy that she was permitted to play her rightful part in the United Nations Assembly and hopes that she may be able to contribute to the United Nations."

Mrs. Pandit told newspapermen at the La Guardia airport last night before she left in the British airways 'plane *Balmoral*: "The United Nations Organisation is as important to India's future as it is to the future of the entire world."

VII. INDIAN UNITY MEANS WORLD SAFETY

Two Indian women, representatives of their country at international conferences, spoke to a crowded meeting of Indians. They were Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations Organisation at New York, now on her way back to India and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, a member of the Indian delegation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation at Paris.

The packed audience of several hundreds of Indians accorded a warm reception to the speakers, who were garlanded on behalf of various Indian organisations in London and two women representatives of the Indian community in South Africa.

Remarking that the Indian delegation to the U.N.O. presented their case on a moral plane, Mrs. Pandit declared: "The South African-Indian case was not entirely an Indian issue. It

concerned the coloured population of the world. I had no dirty linen to wash in public. Indeed, I told the South African delegates that they should wash their dirty linen now, before it stinks."

Mrs. Pandit added: "We kept our standard and our dignity. We had a moral issue. Field-Marshal Smuts tried to argue about our untouchability and communalism. He was simply avoiding the issue. We pointed out that racial discrimination in South Africa was only a symbol of what exists in the world today. As long as there is racial discrimination, then with it will remain human conflict."

Mrs. Pandit said that India had the sympathy of a vast number of delegates, especially those from the Asiatic countries. "The Russian delegates surprised us," she added. "They knew more about the question of Indians in South Africa than even some members of our own delegation."

Mrs. Pandit said: "Our voice, the voice of the Indian delegation, was the voice of India. And if we had failed, it would have meant that the very first time the voice of India was raised, it was defeated."

Referring to the points raised by countries, which opposed India, concerning communal differences in India, Mrs. Pandit said that although these had no bearing on the South African situation, they had to be answered and to some extent weakened the Indian position. However, the Indian delegation presented their case in such a manner that it became popular.

Addressing Indian students, who formed

the bulk of her audience, Mrs. Pandit said they should work for Indian unity. "Unity in India now means the safety of the world."

She asked Indians in Britain to consider themselves as ambassadors in this country. "We must fight the battle of India in Britain and in all countries of the world. Our petty troubles—for they are petty and occupy only a small position in the world picture—must be eliminated."

Mrs. Pandit concluded: "I am a little tired of the past. Let us begin a future now, of which we can be proud."

VIII. APPEAL TO CHURCHILL

An appeal to the Conservative leader, Mr. Winston Churchill, and his friends to keep silent about India "for God's sake and let us fulfil our own destiny," was made by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit.

Mrs. Pandit was one of the group of distinguished Indian politicians who heard the opening speeches of the India debate in the House of Commons.

She said that she considered Mr. Churchill's speech as a very mischievous one. "It was to be expected, but I thought he was a little pathetic. While enlarging on instances like the Armenian massacres and trying to point to the parallel of India, he completely forgot that, since that instance, the humanity has been massacred in a global war," she added.

Mrs. Pandit said that she thought the lesson that war should teach those who were willing to learn was that peace and freedom were indivisible.

Mrs. Pandit continued: "When any nation is passing through a period which is an inescapable part of the transition between dependence and freedom, it is up to people to keep their hands off, and not, by their words and actions, aggravate the situation."

She said: "Every sensible person in India deplores the sad occurrences which are taking place there. We are all working incessantly to create goodwill and restore normal conditions. If Mr. Churchill is genuine in his anxiety to see the Indian people free, he should not aggravate the situation by embittered attacks, which contain a mass of half-truths.

"There is one thing we have learned—that we would no longer look for the support of any one, that our freedom must come from ourselves. We have shown our willingness to pay the price of freedom, whatever it may be, and to Mr. Churchill, and those who think with him, I would say for God's sake be silent about India and let us fulfil our own destiny."

IX. LAKSHMI COMES HOME

On December 13, 1946, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit arrived at the Palam ærodrome.

Among those present to receive Mrs. Pandit were: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Dewan Chamanlal, Mrs. Hansa Mehta on behalf of the All-India Women Conference and Miss Chandralekha Pandit.

In a message to the *Associated Press of India*, she siad: "It was a good fight and I feel that it

was a privilege to represent India. Let us hope that the success at the United Nations is symbolic of the success to come in India."

During her stay in the United States, Mrs. Pandit said, she had informal dicussions with M. Molotov, Soviet Foreign Minister, on the question of India's diplomatic relations with Russia. She added that many countries like Egypt, Mexico, Norway and France had also expressed their desire for an exchange of representatives with India.

Speaking about the French-Mexican resolution which was accepted by the Indian delegation and passed by a two-thirds majority, Mrs. Pandit said that the resolution, though couched in mild terms, had a very deep implication if within the next year the Governments of India and South Africa were not able to solve the problem in a manner satisfactory to both, the United Nations would take such steps as they might think it necessary to deal with the matter.

The Russian delegate expressed to Mrs. Pandit his personal regret at India not being elected to the Security Council.

Mrs. Pandit said that in every committee in which India was represented, Indian representatives not only led in the discussions but also received the highest admiration for their part in the debates from other participants. She made a particular reference to the judicial subcommittee on account of the high level maintained by Justice Chagla.

Among the personalities she met in America, Mrs. Pandit made a special reference to Paul

Robeson, who evinced great interest in the question of the colour bar. He had met her several times for discussion of this and allied questions.

X. THE STORY OF U.N.O.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, speaking at a meeting held at Constitution Club, said that she had drawn two lessons from her experience at the U.N.O. The first was that the position of India in the international field was fairly strong and that Indians were as well able to stand up in an international conference as anybody else. In fact, they were better than most. Secondly, "Our foreign policy, as has recently been made known to the Western world, has been very deeply appreciated and all sections of people from all countries came to me and expressed a desire to have a closer understanding and better relationship with India.

"The general impression about the freedom struggle in India is not the same as the freedom struggles in other countries. The Indian struggle is looked upon as a sort of underground rebellion which is the result of some discontented elements fighting the benevolent British, who are trying to protect us from each other. That point of view has never been taken with regard to other nations who have fought, and that is why we have to be so very careful in cementing quickly, while goodwill lasts for us, those relationships which will, in the event of any further troubles amongst ourselves, be useful to us, not to any particular community but to the country as a whole."

The success which the Indian delegation was able to achieve at the U.N.O. was really the success of the U.N.O. itself, she said. In the success of the resolution placed before the U.N.O. by France and Mexico and accepted by India, lay the very foundations of the U.N.O. itself. If that resolution had fallen through, there would have been ample reason to suppose that the foundations of the U.N.O. had not been well and truly laid.

Not only was the Indian delegation able to contribute towards the discussions which took place but in most cases we are able to give a lead that was finally accepted, both in committees, and in the general session.

Great emphasis was laid in speeches by the Anglo-Saxon nations on the fact that a free India had joined the U.N.O. " This, I think, was quite deliberately done, with a view to minimising the part that the Anglo-Saxon nations themselves played against us. Actually the part that Britain played was sabotaging everything that the Indian delegation brought up. It was done subtly and in a very clever fashion but it was sabotage. The constant cry about a free India diverted attention from the main issue. For instance, in committee, a speech would begin by acclaiming India as a sovereign state and then very subtly, in opposing the Indian resolution, they would go on to talk about the internal troubles in India, about Hindu-Moslem clashes which were given such prominence in the press, and inevitably before the end of the speech, the delegate had several times mentioned the ques-

tion of untouchability. By the time he had finished speaking, the picture subconsciously in the minds of the delegates was one of a country torn by strife and dissension, a country which believed in suppressing the minorities and the like.

"Fortunately for us, this sort of thing did not go very far. In the beginning, it did hamper us a little and prevent us, perhaps, from securing all the goodwill we might have secured, but actually we were able to defend ourselves very well. Long before the session was over, we had made it perfectly clear that in spite of the fact that we were not a free nation and in spite of the fact that the National Government in India, although it was a representative government, was not the government of a free India. Yet, we for the first time, as a delegation, represented the voice of India and that we were free to take a line of action as we thought fit and not as dictated to us, either by the Viceroy or by anybody else. This did have a very good impression, especially when they compared it with the work done previously, which obviously in spite of the able people who represented India, was a reflection on the then government of this country."

Referring to India's failure to secure a seat on the Security Council she said: "India fulfils the conditions laid down in the Charter for membership and we felt no great pressure was required in order to line up the nations on our side. But the position was very different and partly through want of experience we failed rather

badly. We might not have secured a seat in any case but I think we would have got more votes had we known how to lobby and create contacts."

Mrs. Pandit made warm references to the countries which had supported and canvassed for India. A large number of Western nations not only spoke in our favour but many of the European representatives said things which the Indian delegation had hesitated to say. Poland, for instance, was amazingly frank. In the same way we had remarkable support from other delegations, outstanding among whom was the Slav bloc. Russia supported us with great force and actually canvassed for us. We had the overwhelming support, naturally, of the Eastern peoples.

"Every other nation went out of its way to try to understand the Indian situation and tell her how anti-Indian propaganda was being done in their respective nations. I was surprised to find that although a great deal was known about the demand of the League, the tribal incident when Pandit Nehru went to the Frontier, etc., yet nothing very much was known about other things that were being done in India or about many of the things the Congress had done in the past. Of course Mahatma Gandhi was almost a legendary figure but he was there somewhere in the background. The more exciting things like the shooting on the tribal border, the murder of innocent Moslems in Bihar and things like that were of primary importance and were not only shown on the screen but the information was conveyed through pamphlets and leaf-

lets issued by various information agencies and in the press.

"I found without exception that not one of the Eastern nations supported Mr. Jinnah. Not only that but in many of the meetings which I addressed the Eastern delegations asked to be allowed to speak. On one occasion when Pandit Nehru's birthday was being celebrated by the national committee for India's freedom a number of Eastern delegates asked to be allowed to take part in the proceedings and speak."

She had been often asked why the U.S.A. had voted against us. She thought the reason was that, at the moment, the U.S.A. was nct very clear about her foreign policy and was not in a position to break away from Britain. An overwhelming fear of communism was responsible for many of her actions in the U.N.O. America, nevertheless, was in unique position of leadership today, and Mrs. Pandit hoped that she would be able to grasp it.

Mrs. Pandit made a critical reference to the propaganda done in America by Begum Shah Nawaz and Mr. Ispahani. The "distressing part" of their propaganda was that they dissociated themselves from the existing Government in India and, in season and out of season, they said that in the very near future there was going to be grave conflict in India because the Hindu majority was going to suppress the Moslem minority. But, like the efforts of Sir Hartley Shawcross, the British delegate to the U.N.O., they "probably did us some good and not much harm."

XI. THE SISTER SUPPORTS THE BROTHER

On January 20, 1947, in the Constituent Assembly Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit vigorously supported the resolution of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, demanding that India should be declared a republic.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit said that it was her privilege in 1937 to move the first resolution after the inauguration of provincial autonomy in the United Provinces, demanding a Constituent Assembly to draw up a constitution for an independent India. " Today, ten years later, that Constituent Assembly is meeting here. I consider this a historic milestone of our progress towards freedom. And yet freedom remains just a little beyond our grasp. Imperialism dies hard. Even though it knows its days are numbered, it struggles for survival. We have before us the instance of what is happening in Burma, Indo-China and Indonesia, and we see how there, in spite of the desperate effort the peoples of those countries are putting up to free themselves, the stranglehold of imperialism is so great that they are unable to shake it off.

" We had seen the sorry spectacle of what happened in San Francisco when the U.N.O. was being founded. The Asiatic nations assembled there and were so dominated by the imperialist powers that ruled them that they could speak with no independent voice, and echoed only the voice of the respective imperialist powers. The result is already seen in the fact that, in spite of the

brave words of the Charter that came into existence at that time, no implementation of that Charter was possible because there was not enough strength behind it. The peoples of Asia were silent and could not insist upon its implementation. Even now we see that Asia is very far behind the peoples of Europe in representation in the U.N.O. and it was perhaps the first time in history that at the last United Nations Assembly a country not free itself was able to raise its voice, only for the cause it was espousing but for the freedom of the oppressed and dependent peoples all over the world. The reason that the United Nations Assembly has recognised this is, I think, due to the fact that India, even today, has within herself the great power of giving a lead to the world.

" An independent India would no doubt assume the leadership not only of Asia but of the world. So, when we meet here in this Assembly to draw up the future constitution of our country, we must not forget that it is not only ourselves and our own good that we must look to, but that we have it in our power to help the entire world towards a better way of life."

" Our contribution to the future," she concludes, " is one of neutralisation of political and social discontent and to that end we must work for the establishment of freedon in our own country and of freedom in the world. Unless Asia comes into her own, the world cannot function. India, to assume her leadership of Asia, and Asia of the world, must first free herself socially, economically and culturally. I

appeal to the members of the House to pass the resolution in order to show that this ancient land is conscious of the challenge that has been presented to her and can live up to the ideals of the past."

XII. INDIA'S FIRST LADY

"India's First Lady" was the designation given to Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit in the January 7 issue of the weekly news magazine *World Report.*

The magazine of world affairs features on its front cover a colour photograph of Mrs. Pandit dressed in a blue *sari* against a blue-green drape.

Inside, in the section devoted to "personalities", an article of over one thousand words presents her as a "new champion in world forums for the millions of Asiatics and Africans who live under colonial flags . . . ."

The article states that "the chief of India's delegation to the United Nations, a forty-six-year-old widow, has left a deeper personal impression on the world's diplomats than any other delegate at the recent meeting of the General Assembly."

It says: "Mrs. Pandit is to India a combination of what Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Madame Chiang Kai-shek are to many people in their respective countries, but with some important distinctions of her own.

"Mrs. Pandit is her country's leading exponent of the emancipated modern women, brought into world politics by family ties, yet able to

stay there through personal ability.

"Unlike Madame Chiang and Mrs. Roosevelt Mrs. Pandit has long been a government officer in her own right. She was the first woman member of a provincial government in India, a post she achieved nine years ago.

"Mrs. Pandit is a writer, a lecturer and a gracious hostess, but, in terms of the politics of her own country, she is far more radical than the other two eminent women. For where empires are concerned, Mrs. Pandit is frankly a revolutionary.

"She wants freedom for subject races wherever they have not yet attained political independence."

The article then reviewed the Indian delegation's victories at the United Nations session in the disputes with South Africa over racial discrimination, and gave a biographical sketch of Mrs. Pandit, describing her Brahmin background of wealth, her education in England and India, her interest in politics after meeting Mahatma Gandhi and the incidents which landed her in gaol for civil disobedience.

The magazine noted that since Mrs. Pandit's return home, there had been an outcropping of criticism.

"The Indian press is not universally well impressed by her dashing elegance, her gift for moving in an aura of dramatic political sensations. It has been charged that she was unable at New York to change from emotional oratory to the cold bargaining of the last days of the Assembly meeting.

"The division at home over Mrs. Pandit's position in world politics makes her more than ever a world symbol of India. Her own problems are a mirror of India's larger troubles, because her future political effectiveness, like that of India, depends to a large extent upon the ability to achieve unity at home."